The Priest

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December, 1950

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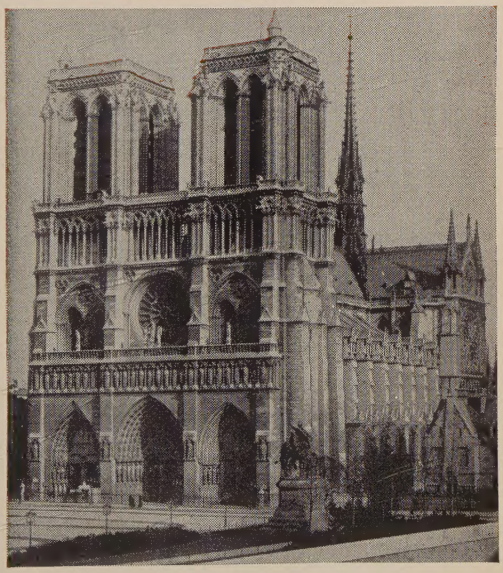

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An Act of God

Because of the eastern blizzard, publication of this issue was held up several days. Believe us, though —we met our deadline as closely as was humanly possible.

The English Centenary

IN view of the recent centenary of the restoration of the hierarchy we thought some exerpts from the letter in the London Times, October 14, 1850, might be of current interest. Said the Times pontifically of the "new-fangled Archbishop of Westminster," Cardinal Wiseman: "If this appointment is not intended to be a clumsy joke, we confess that we can only regard it as one of the grossest acts of folly and impertinence which the Court of Rome has ventured to commit since the Crown and people of England threw off its yoke." Arguing that the choice of Westminster as the see city had "neither tradition nor usage" to justify it, the Times dismissed the act as a mere figment of the papal brain" .. the term "devoid of meaning," and the whole gesture "an unambiguous intention to insult the Church of the Crown of England." The Times then assured its indignant readers of the falsehood of the "absurdly mistaken notion current abroad

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that the conversion of a few weak minds to the doctrines of Rome has shaken the adherence of the people of England to the great principles of the Reformation."

Other fine phrases flung broadside — "egregiously presumptuous and false," "the undying pretensions of Romish authority," "one of the most daring assumptions of power," a "most ostentatious interference."

It seemed that "the Pope and his advisers have mistaken our complete tolerance for a return towards Romish bondage." As you know, Queen Victoria avowed, "I shall not bear it."

On October 1, 1950, the Papal colors fluttered over Wembley Stadium while 90,000 people packed its stands and terraces. Cardinal McGuigan sang the Mass in Westminster Cathedral clothed in vestments of Cardinal Wiseman.

'Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott'

WE were mightily interested in some research conducted by that redoubtable musicologist, Caspar Petrus Koch, on "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," the battle-hymn of the Reformation, universally ascribed to Martin Luther both as to words and music.

"It is a significant fact," says Dr. Koch, "that during Luther's lifetime not a single hymn tune was attributed to him. Some ten years after his death, Sleidanus, Luther's first biographer, credited him with the authorship of both text and music of 'Ein' feste Burg.' By the end of that century no less than 137

THE PRIEST **DECEMBER, 1950** **VOL. 4, NO. 12**

"Take heed to thyself and to thy teaching: be earnest in them. For in so doing, thou wilt save both thyself and those who hear thee."
First Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy (iv. 16)

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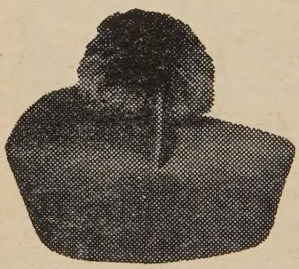

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hymn tunes were being attributed to him."

By 1900, more critical scholarship had cut the number to three. And today the score stands at zero.

Back in 1900, Baeumker had shown that all the musical phrases of "A Mighty Fortress" had been stolen from Gregorian chant.

"That still left Luther with the credit of having cleverly strung together various Gregorian phrases into one homogeneous whole. But that was not the end," says Dr. Koch.

He then goes on to quote Dr. Wilhelm Middelschulte, Chicago organist of international reputation, himself a Lutheran.

"The melody to 'Ein' feste Burg,'" says Dr. Middelschulte, "is found in a motet by Johann Walther, line for line, in 1524. Luther wrote his stanzas five years later, in 1529. The proof of this statement is found in an article by Bernhard Ziehn, famous theorist, in the **Allgemeine Musikzeitung** about 30 years ago. Ziehn quotes the melody from Walther's motet and compares it with the melody of 'Ein' feste Burg' and he concludes his article, 'this proves that "A Mighty Fortress" was not built by Luther.' Koenig's **Deutsche Literaturgeschichte** states the same thing."

To conclude, "Wilhelm Nelle, prominent Lutheran hymnologist, finally acknowledges with philosophic complacency that 'Not a single melody, not even 'Ein' feste Burg,' can with certainty be ascribed to Luther."

We suggest that you file this little item for reference the next time Reformation Day is celebrated in your community with flowery references to Dr. Luther's achievements as a writer of popular hymn tunes.

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OF 15,000,000 men examined during the mobilization entailed by World War II, 12% were rejected as bad risks from the psychiatric point of view—which percentage constituted 38% of those rejected for all causes. Thereafter, 387,000 soldiers were discharged (37% of the disability discharges from the Army), 76,000 Navy personnel (32% of their medical discharges) for psychiatric reasons. In addition, the Army got rid of another 163,000 for such reasons as psychopathic personality, mental deficiencies, drug addiction, and homosexuality; the Navy let another 91,000 go from training centers for allied causes.

Harry V. McNeill disclosed these figures and others in a paper read at the annual meeting of The American Catholic Philosophical Association for 1950.

At the end of the war, he went on, the Veterans Administration was faced with responsibility for 450,000 who received disability compensation as a result of neuropsychiatric discharges. To meet this burden even in part, the Administration expanded its hospital setup to include over 50,000 beds. It employs about 300 staff psychologists and trains some 700 more at various universities, including Fordham and Catholic University.

Dr. McNeill was himself a psychologist for the Veterans Administration and is now with the U.S. Public Health Service. With this latter field in mind, he notes that many a normal person is plagued with anxieties, aches and pains of obscure origin; students

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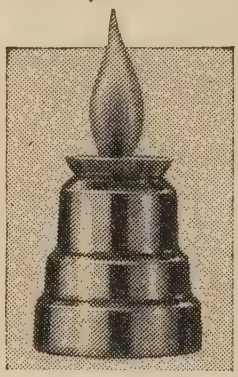

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of the health situation in the U.S. claim that some eight and a half million Americans could profit by psychotherapy and that from 30 to 60% of all patients consulting doctors do so for complaints that rise from emotional disorders.

Incidentally, isn't there some significance in the fact that the Menningers have replaced the Mayos in the popular eye? They speak now of Doctor Will and Doctor Karl (Menninger) the way we used to speak of Doctor Will and Doctor Charlie (Mayo).

The Other Side of the Railing

THIS summer, for the first time in years, we assisted at a Sunday Mass from the other side of the railing — always a refreshing and instructive experience.

It was in a little resort town Down East. A seat charge was lifted at the door—tolerable, perhaps, in a parish swollen so abnormally during three months of the year.

The church itself was neat and freshly painted, and the vestments were in good shape. With pleasure we noted a green antependium and canopy. The choir was all-male, and although it was a Low Mass, the men chanted the Proper on a psalm-tone and then sang as much of the Ordinary as they could crowd in. That was a new one on us.

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The First Million

FOR the last three or four years we have been in the habit of watching the Baltimore Catholic Review for the (annual) returns for the Society of the Propagation of the Faith. Perhaps you already know why, as you may recall our citing the figures from St. Alphonsus Church, the venerable old shrine at Saratoga and Park, which thousands crowd several days a week.

This year we read with the now usual amazement that St. Alphonsus turned in a total of $66,608.66: $2,563.43 the general mission fund; $44,270.23 for specific causes; $19,775.00 for Mass stipends.

It occurred to us to try to find out what the grand total of this remarkable generosity would be over a period of ten years. We wrote the pastor, The Reverend Louis J. Mendelis, if he would be so kind as to look up past returns and let us use them. Here they are.

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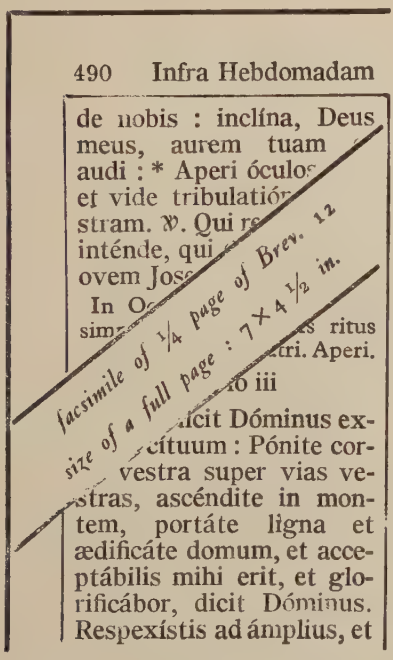
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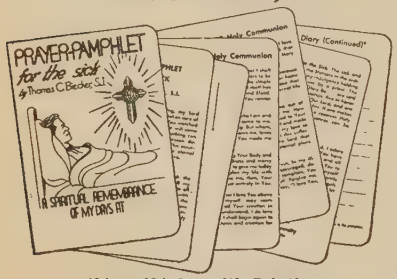

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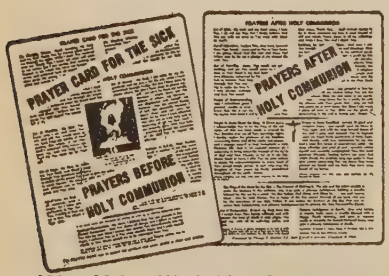

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This overall figure of more than half a million breaks down as follows: Ordinary, $28,192.15; specific causes, $329,382.03; Mass intentions, $176,849.00.

Perhaps more interesting to directors of local Societies for The Propagation of the Faith is the fact that there has been a tremendous increase from the earlier days when Fr. Mendelis first began this concentration on the missions. One need only look at the figures for 1940-1: $242.11, $4,703.02, and $2,940.00, respectively.

Passing this information on to you yearly is one of the things we enjoy most about our job. If we could give an annual award to one of America's priests in the name of **The Priest**, we would certainly nominate Fr. Mendelis as its first winner. Unfortunately we'd have some trouble getting him into the limelight—he doesn't like it and has assiduously kept out of its way. In fact we are somewhat relieved that he ever answered our letter. Had we written him for some favor we would have felt no such anxiety.

Hosts That Bleed

PERMIT us, please, to quote an item that appeared in the July issue of **The Monstrance**, published

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in Australia by the Blessed Sacrament Fathers. It caught our eye, as it naturally would any priest's, and we thought you too might like to see it:

"Isn't it strange," the writer says, "that in this enlightened 20th century there should still be so much ignorant prejudice—even in the seats of learning, among those who profess to know? Let me quote an example. If stale bread is left lying about it soon develops a mould; that is to say, a white fungus makes its appearance after about five days. Later on, if conditions remain dry, this is succeeded by a greenish mould. This is yet another fungus, but of a different type. Should conditions become damp and warm, a red patch will occur on the bread. This is caused by an organism known 100 years ago as **bacillus prodigiosus**, or miraculous bacillus. I have seen specimens that exuded drops of a thin, clear, red liquid, like red ink, but quite different from the thick, sticky, darker appearance of blood. To give it its proper scientific name, it is **serratia marcescens**, so called because associated with decay. Sometimes it has made its appearance in so wide-spread a fashion as to be almost epidemic. Although harmless, its color has been interpreted as a danger signal, and it caused quite a panic in Italy in the early 19th century.

"Now, I know of two cases (1932 and 1945) where a professor, showing students round the laboratories at Cambridge, has called attention to this red growth on bread, and has said: 'That explains the so-called miraculous Hosts of the Catholics, whose

Continued on page 944

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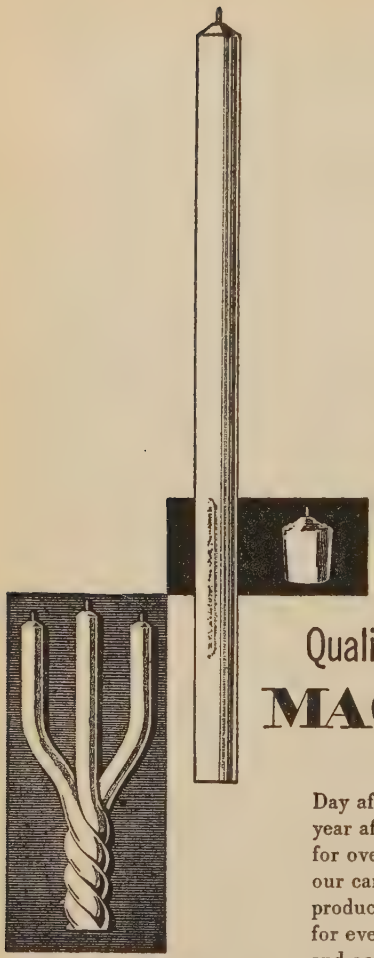

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The Priest

Vol. VI DECEMBER, 1950 No. 12

Editorial Comment

Russell - - - Winner

MANY of us will find the nomination of Bertrand Russell for the '50 Nobel Prize extremely interesting. Not surprising, either.

Assuredly we had no way of knowing who would be selected, particularly since the '49 winner was announced only this year and it seems to be increasingly difficult to make the choice. But it does seem with the help of hind-sight that Russell had peculiar advantages that put him out in front, at least in contemporary Sweden, which is specially predisposed, shall we say, prejudiced, to receive his ideas with applause.

The nominating committee for the Prize would loudly disclaim any prejudice. We would like to believe them. We would, too, had they, for example, nominated Gilson for his historical studies, or Maritain for the depth of his wisdom or Dawson for his analyses of the role of religion in society. The list could obviously be extended. Nor need it be limited to these Catholic names which readily come to mind.

Open Mind

It is, of course, the chief source of gratification to the modern liberal to proclaim to all that he is without prejudice, though the proclamation be often enough simply absurd. However one is to define liberal (this, we beg you, do not ask of us now!), a man may be without prejudice in two ways: he has made no earlier "praejudicia" or judgments by way of principles, or he has deliberately kept an open mind till he can examine the facts and the merits of any given case.

To confess that one has no *praejudicia* is to confess ignorance, whether culpable or not. Thus the present writer has no previous judgments relative to the question of whether the number of stars is odd or even. To boast that one has no prejudices in the latter and bad sense is indeed a step one hesitates to

take, human nature being what it is. Only the contemporary befuddled liberal and (wide) open mind does not fear this bit of braggadocio.

Now what would make Russell's name so musical to the Swedish ear? Why would one dare to raise the suspicion of "prejudice" in this pejorative sense?

One need only hearken back a few years ago to what he stood for in the popular mind in the United States; add to that a cursory sketch of what modern Sweden stands for in our world; voila! the answer.

We refer, of course, to the furor of which he was the center in the New York City College case. Then, a little over a decade ago, he was violently opposed by numerous citizens as a person unworthy of teaching the sons of citizens. His books were gone over with a fine-tooth comb; the record of his private life was read out loud. The combination proved insurmountable to his backers in spite of a lot of vociferous appeals on the part of Columbia Teachers College and allied institutions to fair play, open-mindedness, and the aforesaid "liberal" spirit.

Trial Marriages

It seems that Earl Russell had both taught and practiced things quite alien to the mind of the voters. Thrice married and twice divorced, he had acted on his own principles. No one could accuse of inconsistency the ethician who advocated trial marriages for university students and experimental marriages for all at least till the advent of children. It was in fact this very consistency that irked most.

We still have at hand the account offered the Baltimore *Sun* readers by the so-called sage of that city, the now ailing H. L. Mencken, who was then at the heights of his wonderful powers of invective. Characteristically, Mr. Mencken managed to damn all parties before he got through; long ago having taken as a motto the circumstantial curse of Mercutio: "A plague o' both your houses."

Mr. Mencken making concessions to various parties clearly thought them equally obnoxious. First he heckled the teachers in public schools who to his mind, if not elegantly, had "converted themselves into minor public functionaries and embraced the public teat." So doing, they abrogated any alleged right to "teaching anything they please." This much, left-handedly, in favor of the courts which upheld Russell's ejection from CCNY. For a broadside at the school system he let go with this: "The public schools of all countries are no more than sounding boards for the dominant quacks. If a Hitler happens to be in power, as in Germany, they teach the blather of totalitarianism; if the reigning mountebank is a Roosevelt, they teach the congeries of imbecilities and false pretenses passing under the name of democracy."

The objection of Columbia

Teachers College he cited as "one more proof that whatever comes out of (it) is apt to be bosh."

Silly To Argue . . .

Then he turned on the Earl himself, but again he wore his rue with a difference. Of Russell he said, "I do not recall the whole corpus of his heresies . . . but the one currently at issue is well known. It is to the effect that adultery is very far from being as wicked as it is held to be by moral theology." Mencken would deny chiefly that it is as "pleasant" as alleged. But he went on in a traditional vein to exercise it; "After all there is such a thing as honor, even in democratic societies, and when a man (or woman) promises formally to be faithful unto death it is silly to argue that that solemn promise may be repudiated at will. It may be unwise to prohibit adultery by law, but it surely is sophistry to argue thereby that the renunciation of it by a free act is not binding in conscience."

We hope you will pardon our dependence here upon Mencken. It is not so much that his way of presenting the case is particularly cogent. Rather it is that he pretty well summed up the general attitude with both its strength and weaknesses. Above all his testimony shows (and this is nearer the point) the uncongeniality of the Earl's thoughts in the New York of that day. Certainly he would have won no awards there, and then.

Of course New York has a large Catholic population. It might be called from said liberal point of view, reactionary and obscurantist; "medieval minded" perhaps is the term, since as we shall see Russell takes a dim view of those ages.

Uncontrollable Passion

Ah, but in modern Sweden! "More advanced in all sexual problems than any other country is Sweden." Who said that? Grace Naismith, associate editor of *Reader's Digest*, identified by *The American Mercury* which carried a leading article by her in the July 1950 issue ("The Racket in Contraceptives") as a writer on "maternal health problems for many national magazines." In that article she made a strong plea for The Planned Parenthood Federation clinics (over two hundred throughout the country) arguing somehow that if birth control had begotten the contraceptive "racket" more birth control would wipe it out, that the "clinics" while preserving and presenting the very ideas which gave life to the racketeers would be fostering complete selfishness and by regarding men and women as instruments of uncontrollable passion choke them to death. (THE PRIEST, September, 1950, p. 643 ff.)

Perhaps of greater interest is the fact that she made this observation about Sweden not in the *Mercury* but in a later article which appeared in the *United Nations World* magazine, apparently an official organ of the

UN (U.N. World, August 1950, p. 34).

Just what is so praiseworthy about Sweden? To quote Grace Naismith again, "Birth control is not only sponsored by the government but there is the unique [Thank God!] (our interpolation) National League of Sexual Education which has as its sole aim the enlightenment of the people on all sex questions."

She lists as a "result of this intelligently planned organization" the alleged fact that in the words of a certain Dr. Nils Nielsen "the youth of Sweden today physically, mentally and morally stands higher than any earlier generation."

When one finds out what his standards are, one begins to question the use of the term "higher" and to doubt if Dr. Nielsen knows which end is "up"!

Old Swedish Custom

We learn that the "extra marital birth rate" is high in Sweden (Dr. Nielsen doesn't use the word illegitimacy); that "there's an old Swedish custom that marriage be postponed until the birth of the first child," that there is no stigma attached to illegitimacy and that the unfortunate child shares full legal rights with its siblings (which is only logical and perhaps charitable as well). Naismith adds, "Incidentally half the adult population of Sweden is unmarried." Whether or not the sentence should be introduced by that particular adverb may be debated.

We are further expected to share this author's grief when she states, "Among the lower strata of the population, the birth control techniques are more imperfectly known, and the same complaint against inadequate and prohibitively expensive methods is heard in Sweden." What can one expect from the lower strata, eh?

Another result of "this intelligently planned organization" which the author does not add and perhaps does not know is that today Sweden is stagnant not only economically but statistically. Her birth rate has fallen so low that there are not enough men to do the work demanded by the ordinary exigencies of life. We read recently, with a certain satisfaction some might call smugness, that Sweden seeks to import laborers from Italy. We noted also in a late report that no one can get men to bother speeding up the production of necessary commodities. There is so much socialization and so much security that the edge has been taken off all the ordinary drives.

This may indeed be anti-socialistic propaganda and reactionary 'economic r o y a l i s m' (that famous phrase!) but it is tempting to speculate on an authentic report furnished us by the (Cleveland) *Universe Bulletin* in an interview with a Catholic prelate from Sweden that the teeming masses of Italian humanity are beginning to look inviting to man-power-hungry Sweden.

Church In Sweden

It is from one point of view notorious that Italy is Catholic; from any point of view it is evident that a country like Sweden is definitely anti-Catholic, even actively so. For three hundred years Catholics there, a pitiful minority, have lived under laws that in their regard must be called penal. Only recently have a few measures been endorsed which hold forth some amelioration of their abject condition. Under these measures Catholic schools become possible if still under the supervision of state authorities; a few religious houses may be opened, if confined to native Swedish membership; Catholic children need no longer attend Lutheran religious instruction though they will have to undergo examination by Lutheran ministers on their competence in their knowledge of the Catholic Faith; a few Catholics may get elected to political office at least theoretically and may hold teaching positions in universities, other things being equal (and they won't be). They will still have to notify Protestant ministers of their forthcoming marriages.

The Church then is still repressed, still the object of hatred. The ideas current in Swedish intellectual circles are anti-Catholic and anti-Christian. Pagan morality has firm hold on political and civil life, where man is reduced to the animal level. Modern ideas are canonized and the Christian past held in abhorrence. Ethics becomes, ostensibly, enlightened expediency but ultimately the plaything of the individual who alone judges at its center.

Nothing New

In a word, Sweden was antecedently prepared to recognize the greatness of Russell; his ideas are already its own; his moral standards nothing new there.

His theories of sexual latitudinarianism, his denial of the scientific value of ethics, his dismissal of the theistic proofs as "arguments for a conclusion given in advance," his disdain for Thomas Aquinas ("There is little of the true philosophic spirit in Aquinas"), his underlying and stark pessimism, all these things had previously prepared a place for him.

This is not to derogate from the value of his studies, say, on Leibniz or to underestimate the influence of his empiricism, or assay the merits of the Principia Mathematica which he coauthored with Whitehead. Least of all this; for of its three volumes one mathematician has confessed he has never met a colleague who had read them all. It is even said that only two people have read the Principia from cover to cover and a rascally professor commented: "Whether the authors themselves were included in this estimate I have been unable to ascertain."

The fact is that with Russell one must always distinguish between the philosopher and the publicist—if possible. And he

has intertwined them often enough to make disentanglement difficult.

The Publicist

Unfortunately, too, it is Russell the publicist who makes the news, Russell, the propagandist, pontificating, proclaiming, anathematizing and not infrequently stumbling awkwardly in full course.

A recent broadside against the Church, "In the middle ages teaching became the exclusive prerogative of the Church with the result that there was little progress, either intellectual or social" prompted a reviewer in the London *Times* to comment, "The palm for the most stupid remark made by a man of genius during the past year ought to be awarded to Russell's sentence." "As a political philosopher," says the same reviewer, "Russell is an amateur." But here again, it is in the field of political and social philosophy that he has sought and commanded the greatest attention.

Well, the prize has been awarded. The nomination will in all likelihood be received with applause not only in Sweden but wherever modern liberals and modern pagans gather together to war on the ancient ways and the old ideals. This is indeed a triumph of sorts.

May we, though, warn the Swedes against those Italian laborers. They are more dangerous than Sweden realizes! They have a knack like the Irish of taking over once they settle down. They have talent and industry and leadership and a flair for administration. Worst of all—they are Catholics and they *will* have children.—G. J. G.

Jail Christmas

"Christmas Day, 1848. In my cell aboard the **Dromedary** hulk . . . The men have had a holiday. The weather is bright and warm, and the whole of this wooden building is reeking with plum-pudding.

"I hear the distant sound of loud applause and stamping of feet, reminding me of Conciliation Hall. The man who attends me says it is a company of amateur convicts enacting a tragedy on the lower deck.

"I wish them all a merry Christmas and many happy returns of the same; but I doubt if it will ever return me. I am sitting all day, shrunk together in my cell, dismally ill, and wrapped up in coats, like a man on a box-seat of a coach. Read **Anthony and Cleopatra.**"—John Mitchell, **Jail Journal.**

Mince Pies

Mince pies are eaten at Christmas in memory of the gifts brought by the Magi to the Infant Saviour. Often the crust of the pie was shaped as a cradle.—**Assisi.**

The Painless Pulpiteer

Taking the "ouch" out of religion

Willis L. Whalen

THE critics have long taken pot shots at the master of theological phillipic whose sermon begins with a rant and ends with a rave. And rightly so; for his caustic, carping pulpit efforts have done much harm to the cause of religion. But while the critics have trained their guns on this type of preacher, another, equally harmful, has appeared from the opposite direction. He is the painless preacher.

The reason why this fellow has slipped in with little comment or censure is that he is perfectly in tune with the times. We are living in an analgesic age. Pain, today, is public enemy number one. Business and professional men whose products and services involve pain are well aware of this fact. As a result, they spend much money and effort to make their relations with the public as pleasant as possible. They know that the less pain they inflict the more customers they will have. The painless preacher follows the same strategy for the same reason.

No sane man will quarrel with the druggist who sugar-coats his bitter pills. Few will find fault with the undertaker who hides the distressing pile of dirt under an imitation grass carpet. However, when we see the sign *Painless* not only on the dentist's door but also tacked to Father's pulpit, it is time to ask if this form of salesmanship hasn't gone a bit too far.

What is painless preaching? Briefly, it is that which avoids the harder teachings of Christianity because they might hurt the feelings of the faithful. In general, the painless preacher gives a wide berth to all matters that prick sensibilities. High on his taboo list are death, judgment, hell, mortification, and other subjects that make most moderns wince. Instead of speaking of these things, he is perpetually pointing out the pleasant features of the practice of religion and soft-peddling its more difficult parts.

Behind this spiritual pussyfooting is the fear that weak Catholics may abandon their religion altogether if too much stress is put upon its painful side. The painless preacher makes religion appear easy in order to get men to practice it. His motive is good; but his act produces an effect opposite from that intended. Make religion appear easy, and the faithful will take it easy.

Ours Is the Via Crucis

Pulling punches in the pulpit will not save souls. The way to

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Father Whalen is a priest of the Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon.

heaven is not a paved highway bordered with roses, it is a rugged road hedged with thorns. The preacher must impress that fact upon the people. He does them a great disservice when he describes this world as a valley of bliss instead of the vale of tears it really is.

If preaching religion straight from the shoulder means losing some of the weaker of the flock, then they must go. The Divine Master did not soften His doctrine to keep the weaker in the fold. For example, when He promised the Eucharist at Capharnaum, He knew the effect this "hard saying" would have: "From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer went with him." He let them depart without a word.

Never did Christ try to recruit new followers or to keep old ones by hiding the fact that His religion was difficult. He did the opposite. He told His listeners quite frankly, "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him *deny himself* and take up his *cross daily* and follow me." That thought ran as a refrain through all His preaching, and not without purpose.

The Need of Salt With Savor

The early Christians were to be the salt of the earth. Theirs was to be the task of smashing the shackles of pagan superstition and spiritually regenerating a corrupt world. That was no job for the weak and the lukewarm. It demanded salt with savor. It demanded men strong in faith and disciplined in morals. Christ preached to get such men.

Right now the earth is badly in need of more salt with savor —namely, Catholics who will put the salvation of their souls above all, and who will bring the world back to God by their prayers, their example, and their apostolic zeal. That type of Catholic will never be developed by preaching painless, pious platitudes.

I am not advocating a return to the "hell and damnation" tirades of a few decades back. A pulpit filled with fire and brimstone is as bad as one filled with sugar and spice. Between these two extremes is a bittersweet medium which should be known to every priest. It is the medium so well exemplified in that master model of all sermons, the Sermon on the mount.

As Goodier says, "There was hatred of everything evil, indignation, wrath, condemnation, fire and death, death undying, meted out in fierce anger against it; yet never did a sinner feel himself condemned or his hope extinguished, but only knew that forgiveness and love, and warm pressure to a warm heart awaited him if he would have it. There was a keen sense of justice, justice idealized, justice defended, strict justice without favor, yet was the hand that dealt it out soft and tender and soothing. There was passionate love of truth, truth that feared nothing, truth open and outspoken, to saint and sinner, to

selfish rich and sensitive poor, to men in high places and to those downtrodden. . . He was tolerant and He was stern. He bent to the weakest, yet He stood up like a tower."

This is the familiar pattern of all Our Lord's preaching. He made known the will of His Father in all its severity; but He softened His presentation by reminding His hearers of God's mercy, forgiveness, and love. He told them that suffering was not only good but a blessing, "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake"; then He hastened to add the words that made this hard truth acceptable, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." by skillfully compounding its bitter parts with its sweet He presented a doctrine that appealed to all men of good will.

Making Saints

Such is the pattern of preaching we must follow. It is not painless. It will neither prevent wounded sensibilities, nor guarantee the easy acceptance of the doctrines we teach. Many will turn a deaf ear to our words. That is to be expected. We cannot hope to be more successful than the Divine Master, Who preached to thousands with little apparent effect. But we can hope to achieve what He did — the formation of a corps of Christians who will revitalize society with the spirit of Christ.

The majority of priests are, no doubt, doing just that. There are indications, however, that at times some of us fall victims to the modern trend of taking the "ouch" out of everything. In selling religion we are tempted to adopt the current psychology of salesmanship because we see it successfully at work in many forms. If a man wants to peddle a potato-peeler or a philosophy all he has to do, it seems, is to show the public that his product has taken a little pain out of living and he has made a sale. But this system will not sell religion. It might bring a down-payment on man's debt to God. It might fill our churches and keep the collection up. It might even produce mediocre Christians. But it will not produce what society needs most— Saints.

So They Say

If the sun shines through the apple tree on Christmas Day there will be an abundant crop the following year.

In various parts of Europe there is a legend that at midnight On Christmas Eve animals have the power of speech. Related to this idea is the belief that at midnight cattle rise in their stalls and kneel to adore the new-born Christ. In the North of England there is a legend that at this self-same hour the bees hum a hymn to the glory of the Saviour.—**Drogheda Independent.**

The Family Apostolate

Edgar Schmiedeler, O.S.B.

Snapshot of a fast-growing movement

IN a recent issue of THE PRIEST "Junior Senex" rather pointedly asked for practical suggestions with regard to a number of fields of Catholic Action. Among them was the family. This article aims to give him the information in that particular field insofar as it can be done in the space allotted. Further information can be obtained for the asking by "Junior Senex" or anyone else from the Family Life Bureau, National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1312 Massachusetts Ave., N. W., Washington 5, D.C. That is why the bishops maintain this agency.

As a title for the article the writer has chosen the familiar one "The Family Apostolate." This was used by the bishops in their statement of 1948, and is all-inclusive; that is, it extends to all the organized activities being promoted in behalf of the family today. However, we cannot conceivably describe all of them here. At best we can outline a picture of the field of family action, and then note several activities in detail by way of example. And that seems to be about what "Junior Senex" desires.

The fact is that the characteristic note of the rapidly advancing family life movement is that of variety of activity. That too, seems to be the reason for the apostolate's unusual growth. It makes it possible for practically all organized groups and individuals however to participate in it. Such varied lines of action as the following are seen: the encouragement of religious practices—for instance, the parental blessing or the use of religious expressions in the home; varied phases of parent education or of child care and training in the home—religious and moral, physical and mental; the promotion of inspirational activities in the family field—for example, honoring outstanding parents and promoting the public renewal of the marriage promises; the promoting of measures aimed at correcting economic conditions harmful to family life —mothers in industry, inadequate income coupled with exorbitant prices, and the like, being perhaps the outstanding current examples; the dissemination of a correct ideology on marriage and the family and the uncovering of false teachings in this field.

One might well immediately add, too, that no less varied are the media or channels made use of in the promotion of the family apostolate. Even for the purpose of disseminating correct Christian ideas and ideals re-

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garding marriage and the family alone we find the following used extensively: lectures; sermons; the distribution of family literature; forums; courses for leaders; family retreats; radio series; conferences — a popular term also heard in this connection more recently is Cana Conference; institutes; discussion clubs; workshops; conventions; courses in and outside of school, for married and unmarried; local and national organizations.

Though at least some little differences can be pointed out regarding all these various media, their end-results total up to about the same: they scatter correct ideas and sparks of interest here and there and everywhere—in homes, in organized groups, in parishes, in communities. The correct ideas disseminated counter the influence of false ideas. The sparks of interest strike fire, inspiring individuals to action. Some of them unite, growing into blazing fires of interest. And we might well add this optimistic note: evidences of a nationwide conflagration of interest in the right ideas and highest ideals of Christian marriage and family life are showing themselves with hardly less than astounding rapidity. It should encourage us to keep up the good work.

Dissemination of Literature

But to turn to a few specific examples. Take the simple matter of distributing popular booklets relating to family life. It has been the experience of this writer that this is a truly useful way of promoting a better family life. Once the literature is made available, a reader will give it his attention as he finds time and as the spirit moves him to read it. He may also pass it on to friends. He may suggest it for a church book-rack or for use by a family forum or institute. He may repeatedly re-read it himself. An address to an audience, no matter how large, is necessarily quite limited. It reaches a restricted group and is soon forgotten. But once ideas are in print, and the printed material is vigorously disseminated, they go on and on, reaching thousands and even hundreds of thousands—yes, at times even millions.

This particular activity, as already stated, is a very simple one. Often much good is accomplished through it by the mere fact that someone is thoughtful enough to send for suitable publications and in some way bring them to the attention of the people who can be benefited by them. Before the writer, for instance, lies an order for more than a thousand copies of various family publications. It came in the morning mail from Monsignor C. J. Riordan of St. Mary's Cathedral, Lincoln Nebraska. There is no question that, energetically put to use by individuals and groups, these publications could influence the family life of a large proportion of the people of the Diocese of Lincoln.

The Discussion Club

Again, take the well-known and popular medium for promoting the family apostolate, the discussion club. Here again we find the note of simplicity. And it should be left simple. There is neither value nor sense in making a discussion club a complicated or difficult thing. Normally, it develops as follows: A small group, interested in studying together some phase of marriage or family life, meets informally at stated times—in a parish hall, for instance or in a school, or for that matter, in the home of one of their members. Some publication is selected by the members to serve as a guide for their discussions. At each particular sessions, some leader, selected previously, sets before the other members the phase of the subject to be discussed that day. The others are then given an opportunity to contribute their ideas. Occasionally an outside speaker may be brought in to address the group. However this is not essential. If there are questions that remain unanswered, someone may be appointed to look for further information regarding them, either from other printed sources or from informed individuals. There is no question that through this simple and informal medium, much information can be obtained and much interest can be aroused on the part of members. Both may well result in real benefit to family life.

To take one more example in detail, let us turn to an activity in the strictly spiritual field, rapidly growing in popularity today—namely, the family retreat. This is a brief spiritual refresher that affords husband and wife the opportunity to renew their spiritual lives together. Unlike the customary retreat for the individual man or woman, extending over the general field of Christian living, the family retreat limits itself to the spiritual aspects of Christian marriage and to the ways and means by which family life can best be made to serve as a medium for the sanctification of the spouses and their offspring. More specifically, it places emphasis on the following: the profound dignity of Christian marriage as a sacrament, as a symbol of the union of Christ with His Spouse, the Church, and as a unit in the Mystical Body of Christ; the Christian home at its best; the possibilities of the family circle as a place for the practice of the Christian virtues by grownups as a school for their inculcation to the young; the duties assumed in marriage and family life; the correct moral law in marriage; the revival and reintroduction into the home of the simple religious practices which in more Catholic times commonly graced Christian family life.

Keep It Spiritual!

It might well be added here that there will be temptation at times to discuss economic or medical problems, or problems

of child training or marital adjustment. The temptation should be withstood. These do not belong in a retreat. Its limited time should be kept entirely for strictly spiritual matters. There are other media, such as forums and institutes, or the discussion club already described that can be used for giving these more secular subjects attention. And there is the further consideration that the retreat is given by a priest, and a priest is usually not equipped to speak with any real authority on such subjects as those mentioned. The writer has seen more than one priest very decidedly embarrassed for presuming to speak on them.

The retreat is short, never lasting more than a day, frequently only a half day. The reason for this is, of course, the fact that often the retreatants have young children who need their care. Relatives or other volunteers may look after the little ones for a short time. But the children should not be kept separated for any considerable length of time from their parents.

The family retreat should be, as is the mission ordinarily, a parish affair. It is perhaps best held on Sunday. A special place may be reserved for the retreatments at one of the usual Masses, and a special sermon preached for them. In some cases all go to Communion in a body. The remainder of the retreat is in the afternoon and, except for a closing family holy hour, is perhaps best conducted in a hall. The most satisfactory afternoon time has proved to be from 1:30 to 5:30. This provides ample opportunity for the following: three or four conferences; an examination of conscience, the retreat master suggesting questions to help with the examination; one or two opportunities for a brief visit to the Blessed Sacrament or for a few decades of the rosary; an opportunity for asking questions of the priest conducting the exercises; the closing family holy hour.

The last mentioned item, the holy hour, consists of the following: a prayer to the Holy Family; an act of consecration of the family to the Sacred Heart; a prayer for the deceased of the families present; several appropriate hymns; renewal of the marriage promises; recitation of the pledge to Christian Marriage; Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament; the *Te Deum*. At times the recitation of the rosary is added, and in some instances the entire service is held with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

The foregoing paragraphs on the family apostolate must suffice. Certainly much more could be added. But space will not permit. However, let me again cordially invite "Junior Senex," or anyone else who may be interested in doing so, to write us for any further information that they may be seeking in this important field of action.

'Feelings Don't Count'

Lucile Hasley — *She tells us off!*

THIS is going to be the sort of article that should—by all the laws of Holy Prudence—be one of those anonymous jobs. Good old anonymous! It offers one such delightful titles to hide behind: "Madame X" . . . "A Well-Wisher" . . . "Heartbroken Convert" . . . "Militant Mamie" . . . "Indignant Taxpayer" . . . "Occupant In The Sixth Pew From The Front At The 8:30 Mass" . . .

Alluring as these titles are, I —nevertheless—am signing my own prosaic but real name to this bill of complaints. Not because I'm necessarily partial to red (a martyr's funeral *does* rate red, doesn't it?) or fancy myself as another Catherine of Siena but because . . . well, because it seems that I'm a natural for the job at hand. *Someone* has to be the fall guy and I do have one very excellent qualification: no one, in his right mind, can possibly label me anti-clerical.

Rather, my name has become a sort of "I Like Priests" label to hundreds of readers (What Boston is to baked beans, Hasley is to Holy Orders!) for I've not been the least bit bashful in airing my sentiments. Heaven knows I didn't *plan* a career along this line but, by now, my lone claim to fame appears to be this: "Lucile Hasley? Oh, yeah. Isn't that the South Bend dame who likes priests so much? The eccentric writer who claims that priests are her favorite people?"

And it's true. I (eccentric as all get out!) know at least six priests for whom I would cheerfully chop off my right arm, if they really wanted my right arm, and another round dozen for whom I would lop off my left arm. This all sounds rather bloody (and I sincerely hope no cleric puts me to the acid test) but you *do* get the general idea? I want it to very very clear because I am prepared to shoot, on sight, anyone who dares to tamper with by cherished pro-clerical label.

Trusting that I have made smooth my path, I would now like to creep cautiously up on my objective: I would like to claim from you clerics a modest little fee for my press-agent services! I have a very real grievance to present and . . . will you priests give me a fair hearing? Will you at least *listen?*

Let's Hear Her Out

What, I would like to ask, happens to you priests in the confessional? For this convert's money, the metamorphosis that takes place—from Shepherd to Scorpion — is the most disappointing thing ever to come my way. I like priests—yea!—

Very rarely do we suffer a woman to raise her voice in our pages, but we couldn't resist this— by the author of "Reproachfully Yours."

but that liking not only takes a fearful drubbing in the confessional but is gradually giving way to just plain dread. No penitent, they tell me, has yet been killed outright but you can, you know, slowly kill the intangibles: confidence, trust, liking, respect, and spiritual interest.

What, I wonder, is wrong? Has hearing confessions become a lost art? I strongly suspect that it's not lack of skill that's gumming up the works . . . nor the priest's stomach ulcers or gout that's plaguing him . . . but an *unawareness*, on the priest's part, of the importance of confession to the laity. I can't quite believe that absolution is the *only* objective but, if it is, don't tell me! I prefer to believe the spiritual books and hang on to a few dreams.

Seriously, do you priests really want the devotional or "tonic" confession to wither and die on the vines?

Do you think it's your sermons and Catholic Action meetings that are the Big Influence and that confession . . . the *only* personal contact for most parishioners . . . is very incidental?

Do you realize that most people judge a priest more on his performance as a confessor than by his public utterances and Good Works all rolled together? ("This is the sort of priest he really is, when no one else is around to listen.")

Do you perhaps count *too* heavily on the standard dogma: "Priests are only human. You hafta consider human nature. And human nature and 'feelings' don't count. It's the automatic operation of the Sacrament that counts, not the human operator. It's about time the laity got that through their thick skulls."

Those So Thick Skulls

Okay. Feelings don't count. (Who am I to bang my thick skull against the theologians and philosophers?) But of what profit, you priests, to be theologically correct and, in practice, scare off and lose your untheological sheep? Our skulls are often *very* thick, but there's one universal language that we can grasp: kindness. Feelings, I'm very much afraid, are here to stay. (But, if you want to operate on just sheer logic, why not let it work both ways? Where, for instance, is the logic in bulldozing a penitent who says he is doubtful about something? Doubtful means doubtful, doesn't it? And where is the logic in jumping to fantastic conclusions? Such as confessing "impatience with the children" and having the priest thunder back: "And why, madame, aren't your children baptized?" (A nonsequitur that I'm still trying to figure out. I sometimes have the eerie feeling that the priest is still lecturing the penitent who has just left and, hence, I always feel sorry for the penitent who follows *me*. Will he bear the brunt of *my* sins?)

Feelings don't count? Okay. But it's somewhat like the old wheeze: "The operation was

successful but the patient died." The absolution was valid but the penitent lost all interest in the spiritual life, right then and there. The absolution was valid but the penitent, mortally wounded by the gun-fire, crept away muttering "Never again!"

Even when one *knows* the correct theological responses to bitter confessional experiences ("This obviously happened for my own spiritual good!" . . . "One shouldn't seek consolations!" . . . "It's very beneficial to operate on just Sheer Faith!" . . . "If I intended a good confession, it *was* a good confession!"), it seems to me that only a full-fledged saint could *thrive* on such a diet. For the rest of us, prone to feeings as we are, it might well leave us with spiritual rickets.

"Just A Little Kindness"

What you priests don't seem to realize—for the main and simple reason that people don't go around discussing their confessions—is that 98 per cent of your power, for good or bad, lies in that little black box. I'm not expecting you all to be replicas of the Cure d'Ars but . . . man alive! Just a *little* kindness and courtesy goes so very far. Even if you're bored into a stupor on your side of the fence, it does seem that you might—as a bare minimum!—toss in a few "tricks of the trade": such as a simple "God bless you" or "Go in peace" or "Let us now thank God for this good confession." (And that whispered "Say a prayer for me, will you?" from a priest makes the layman feel wonderful. Sort of proud and touched that his prayers are worth a little something, maybe.) There's also the little liturgical touch that's quite nice ("Next Thursday is the feast of Corpus Christi and so let us, during this coming week, remember," etc.) but, actually, it doesn't too much matter *what* touch is used. All I ask, pathetically, is *something* that smacks of the spiritual, something to make it seem like a sacrament rather than a mere chore.

Feelings don't matter, of course, but there's nothing like breaking your neck to get to confession, standing patiently in line, throwing your soul into a good confession and then getting only: "Three Hail Marys," in a voice midway betwixt a grunt and a groan, and—wham!—goes the slide in your face.

From Notch To Notch

Is the Sacrament of Penance what the spiritual books claim, or is it just on a par with brushing your teeth or having a quick gargle?

We laymen regret, naturally, that our confessions aren't very entertaining. But can *we* help it if we're neither in the unitive way nor hardened fugitives from a Georgia chain-gang? We're mostly average citizens with ordinary boring sins, *but* you priests might—through confession—keep lifting us from notch to notch. That calloused soul might become lukewarm; the

lukewarm catch on fire; the "on fire" be inspired to "spread fire." Even that pesky scrupulous soul might, with wise and gentle handling, pass into the "tender" soul stage. And, most important of all, the troubled but timid souls—as they gain confidence in you—might advance past the "I forgot my morning prayers on two occasions" and *really* reveal what's on their minds.

Too much bother? Not enough time? Line waiting? The best confessor I ever had in my life once said to me (when I timidly mentioned there was a line waiting): "At this precise moment, you are the only person in this church who matters." And that, to me, sums up the very essence of the confessor par excellence.

If this article were just a case of licking my own wounds, it wouldn't have much value. I have wounds to lick, all right, but that's not my point. *I'm* all right. *I'm* one of the lucky ones for I have a bulwark of four-star priests in my background. (And can lift my eyes to that star-studdied firmament whenever my spirit fainteth.) Moreover, I have a wonderful spiritual director to pick me up and bind my injuries whenever I'm wounded in battle. (My battle, you understand, is trying to find a good available confessor among the harassed parish priests: a project somewhat like trying to find uranium in my backyard. Yet even when you have a spot of luck, you can't count on finding the same man next time. The name over the confessional may be "Father McGillicuddy" but—and this is a dirty trick, methinks—his assistant, Father Scorpion, may be occupying his box instead. Like Pandora, you don't know what you're going to find.

Converts Are Especially Sensitive

But, as I was saying, I'm not writing for myself. Honest. I'm speaking up on behalf of my more inarticulate and cowed fellow laymen and—believe me! —I know whereof I speak. Ever since I started writing Catholic essays, I have deluged by hundreds of letters from all over the world—mainly from priests and converts. (The priests, to a man, cheer me on . . . thus making me feel like a stinker as I compose this article.) It's the converts, though, who weigh heavily on my soul. They're *such* tender blades of new grass that they don't thrive very well under the Iron Heel and I find myself a very busy ministering angel indeed. Smarting from my own wounds, I doggedly keep writing back to my convert correspondents: "Feelings Don't Count!"

It's a funny set-up. I sometimes feel like the little Dutch boy, sticking his thumb in the dikes to hold back the threatening waters. But to you priests I'm saying: "Help! My thumb's getting tired! I just can't hold this position forever! Someone's got to start *fixing* these dikes."

And then there are the letters from the born Catholics, and it's odd, very odd, how so many

strike the same note. "Your essays are very refreshing but, dear Mrs. Hasley, you couldn't write as you do if you weren't a convert. We envy and admire your free joyous spirit, but *our* spirit got hammered out flat long ago. It would seem you've led a charmed existence during your nineteen years in the Church, for you've not only met the cream of the clerical crop but the whipped cream. *Our* clerical fare has been more on the skimmed-milk side, one might even say the curdled-milk side."

And, in these letters, it's the priests in the confessional who seem to be pressing on their nerve-ends. Are these sensitive souls too ultra-*ultra* sensitive? I used to think so, back in the days when I was having such smooth sailing, but now I no longer can brush them off.

One Rough Experience

May I, please, cite just *one* of my recent rough experiences? I recently crept into the confessional with a very routine and pared-to-the-bone confession and . . . thanks to the excellent and patient coaching from my spiritual director—managed to get through a letter-perfect performance. (The time before I'd inadvertantly used the word "several," in reference to a venial sin, and been shot down in midair.) But, unfortunately, I guess my voice must have trembled a little from the strain. Roared my man: "All right now, come clean! You wouldn't be this nervous if you weren't concealing something. Cut the lying and tell the truth!"

(Feelings don't count? Thank God, they really *don't* count—metaphysically speaking — but, please God, let our faith survive and surmount these unmetaphysical feelings of ours!)

In this case, I emerged shaking like an aspen leaf and wept for ten minutes in a back pew, fervently hoping that all bystanders would think it a sudden attack of hay fever. I also admit that my tears were tears of pure unadulterated anger and indignation. All I could think, shocked to my toes, was: "Dear God! A priest like that could damage you for life. What would *I* do if I didn't have my 'other kind of priests' to revive me?"

And that, in a nutshell, is why I feel so vehemently about all this. Knowing how good confessors *do* operate, and indebted for life to them for their wonderful direction, I find it mighty hard to lower my standards. It is also very hard—when you love the Church intensely—not to *care* what goes on. And, as far as I can figure out, the only alternatives to not caring are to become either hard-boiled or utterly apathetic or treat it all as a big joke: none of which particularly appeals to me. I prefer to be a member of the Church Militant instead of the Church Insufferable.

By and large, we laymen are an inarticulate group—both in confession and out—but do, please, give us the benefit of the

doubt as regards our good will and earnestness. A dopey confession doesn't necessarily mean that a spiritual dope is kneeling before you. Maybe not even the village idiot! Maybe not even a cunning little shyster who is out "to pull something over" on you priests and God!

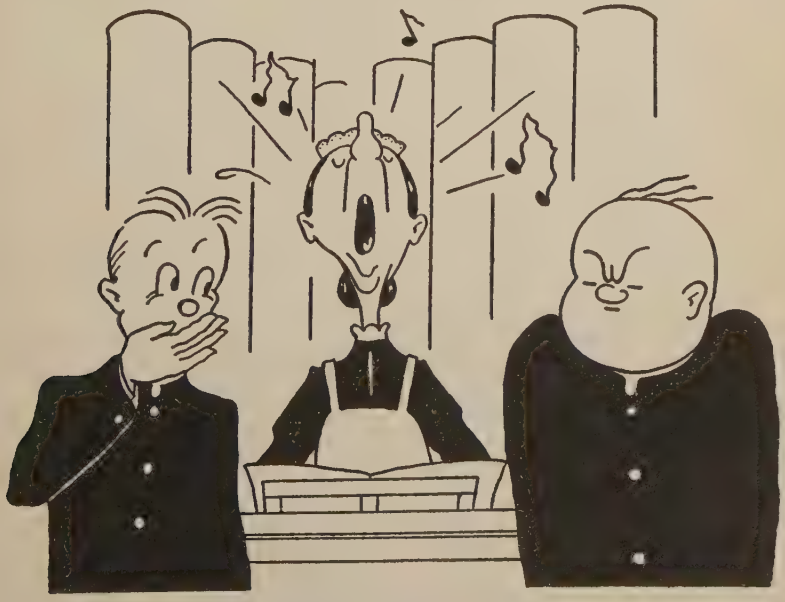
What may be kneeling before you is a temporarily paralyzed soul. A soul who has a very real problem and who needs your help desperately but who . . . when the slide goes back and the priest growls "WELL, and when was YOUR last confession" . . . quietly gives up the ghost.

Prayer

"Our Lady and St. Joseph, come,
Stay with me and mind me!
And if ever I get lost,
Hunt for me and find me!"

—Leonard Feeney.

JULIE --- Or Housekeepers Are Hard To Get



"Silent Night . . ."

But What Is Freedom?

John F. Peifer

"Vis electiva mediorum servato ordine finis"

EVEN a casual glance at the newspapers, magazines, and current books will readily show that freedom in all its manifestation is *the* apologetic question of the moment. The Catholic Church is currently pictured as a dangerous threat to all America holds dear because it is "authoritarian," "totalitarian," and the "sworn enemy of the freedom Western civilization has struggled to achieve." That thesis sold many more than 200,000 copies of Paul Blanshard's *American Freedom and Catholic Power* — a superficially documented secular polemic. Without that as his text, the Rev. Oxnam would have little to speak about.

Blanshard's main attacks have been well answered in a pamphlet by Fr. George Dunne, S.J.— "Religion and American Democracy." And Mr. Blanshard was shown up in public debate by Fr. Robert Hartnett, S.J. but valuable as these and other similar defenses are, it rather seems that we are in the position of one knocking aside, and sometimes throwing back the stones that have been thrown at us. That has its advantages: we can show that we are not irrevocably committed to a policy of union of Church and State in all instances; we try to explain the Inquisition in its historical perspective; we can even show that religious liberty fares much better in the so-called Catholic countries of Italy, Belgi n, and Ireland than it does in he so-called Protestant countries of Sweden and Norway.

Yet all these particular defenses presuppose something much more basic—the very nature of freedom itself. Rev. Mr. Oxnam has perhaps unwittingly put his finger on the heart of the issue—where possibly clarification could be most effective. He said: "The Roman Catholic Church does not believe in religious liberty as *we* understand it" *(Chicago Daily News,* Dec. 8, 1949). And then, here is the real issue: what is the true nature of liberty or freedom?

Sin: An Abuse of Liberty

To get at the nature of freedom in all its manifestations, we must first be very clear as to the nature of that freedom which the human will enjoys. The very first element that impresses us in considering the will is its power to determine itself from within. The Fathers of the Church have always seen a clear attestation of the freedom of the will in those innumerable passages in Scripture where God commands or forbids this or that action, this or that desire. It is further

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Father Peifer writes from River Forest, Illinois

attested to by our daily experience that the will is its own mistress; it is always within its power to will or not to will.

This psychological consideration of the spontaneous character of voluntary acts (and its metaphysical explanation), is but one aspect of the problem. The Christian further realizes that he lives in a universe of law. He is under providential guidance; he is subject to the will of God as supreme legislator. He further ponders the words of Christ that it is the "truth that shall make you free," for "everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin." That resulted in the common Christian axiom that the only true freedom is to do what is right; the possibility of sin is not of the essence of liberty. Sin is really an abuse of liberty, Christ and the blessed in heaven certainly have free wills, but they cannot sin. They are not necessitated to this or that action; but they act, they always preserve the right order of means to end.

Hence these two considerations were incorporated into the traditional definition of freedom of the will (which has its roots in two articles of St. Thomas' *Summa*)—*"Vis electiva mediorum, servato ordine finis* — the force which elects means, while preserving the order to the end." Man does not choose his end; necessarily he wants to be happy because of his nature as a man. God, in His goodness, has appointed the beatific vision as the one and only goal for all men. Choice comes in regard to the means leading to that end. Various possible routes to happiness lie open. but Christ determined which means are absolutely necessary for the attainment of that end; which are useful but not obligatory; which are incompatable with the achievement of that goal. Yet man can let himself deliberately become mistaken regarding these means. Or even when he ought to do, he can refuse to do it by clothing some evil means under the false appearances of good. But these deliberate errors and disordered choices are defects of the will, and are rather indices of freedom than its constituents. A disordered choice is a mutilation of the will. Hence the true liberty of the will is that which keeps the proper ordering of means to end.

"Servato Ordine Finis"

It is precisely on this second element of the definition of freedom that the cleavage between Catholic and secular thought comes. They insist only on the first element—*"Vis electiva mediorum"*—or what is called psychological freedom. In theory, though fortunately not always in practice, they insist that true freedom means doing whatever you want, free from all authoritative guidance. And there is their mistake! The second element of the definition of freedom—*"Servato ordine finis"* —is equally important.

We have some place to go, something to achieve, and we are truly free only when we liberate ourselves form servitude to blind alleys and inept means by choosing only those means that will help us to reach our goal. We *can* sin; we *can* refuse to believe, but we *may not*. In other words, we have the psychological power to sin, but we do not have the moral freedom or the right to make our own laws and determine our own creed. Authority, a term in such unwarranted disrepute today, exists precisely to help us remove the danger of misusing our powers. Authority of God and from God exists to aid us in keeping that all-important ordination of the means we choose to the end to be achieved—to help us truly to be free.

Thy typical present-day Protestant and secular view of freedom almost seems to make freedom an end in itself, without a consideration of the goal to be achieved through the use of that freedom. They give the appearance of a bicyclist who always rides on rollers, simply because he thrills to pumping his legs up and down without caring about going anywhere. The Catholic is much more concerned about where he is going and what route he must take to get there. For him the end to be achieved has preeminence, and he welcomes all assistance and guidance that will help him to achieve that end more securely. Viewed in that light perhaps the inadequacy of the "libertine" view (in the sense of "free-thinking") and the reasonableness of the Catholic view can be most effectively demonstrated.

Particular Instances

It's applications in particular instances are easy to see. The Index of Forbidden Books is a great bugbear to Blanshard, Oxnam, Bowie and the like. Yet when it is brought out that the purpose of thought is not the exercise of memory and reasoning for its own sake, but rather for the acquisition of truth, the Catholic practice is eminently sound.

Private Judgment is a term that most of them savor on their lips. A certain Rev. Mr. Alexander wrote to *Life*: "Protestants will never agree on doctrine, and they should not agree. Differences of opinion stemming from the right of private opinion express the genius of the Protestant heritage." Nov. 29, 1949, p. 5). Which is primary — private judgment for private judgment's sake, or truth? The exercise of freedom of thought is scarcely an end in itself, nor is it even real freedom. Christ taught a definite and ascertainable doctrine; it is not a chameleon that changes color to suit each one's tastes and prejudices. Man's salvation depends upon his accepting and living the truth as Christ proposed it. The whole purpose of the Catholic Church's so-called "authoritarian" teaching office is to guide men effectively to that truth

that makes men free. The Catholic is more free than the "libertines," because he is secure in the possession of truth. The end and the ordination of the means to that end are what makes the difference.

Freedom of Speech

On another level the fundamental inadaquacy of the libertine conception of freedom is clearly seen in regard to freedom of speech. National security was very likely threatened by certain military men who justified their revelation of confidential information by the misunderstood slogan of "freedom of speech." The well-being of the nation was being threatened by local Communist activity, yet they were defended by many non-C o m m u n i s t "libertines," thinking that freedom of speech itself was on trial. It remained for Judge Medina to remind them and the nation that the right of free speech is limited by the common good of the country. In the trial of the Communist leaders in New York, the Judge had to remind the jurors of the true nature of freedom of speech. He said:

"No one could suppose, nor is it the law, that any person has an absolute unbridled right to say or to write or to publish whatever he choses under any and all circumstances.

"Words may be the instrument by which crimes are committed . . . and it has always been recognized that the protection of other interests of society may justify reasonable restrictions upon speech in the furtherance of the general welface" (*Time,* Oct. 24, 1949, p. 22).

The ramifications of the proper notion of freedom are numerous, but it is hoped that these few examples may help to indicate what could well be an efficacious approach towards meeting the present apologetic needs. It can be further enhanced by showing the numerous instances in which even the "libertines" are willing to submit to external guidance of experts because there is an end they wish to achieve. They follow the advice of their physicians—often at great cost and inconvenience—because they want health. They follow the advice of their garage-man in the care of their car, because they want dependable transportation. Why should the end be considered there, and guidance welcomed, while in the all-important matter of religious truth, "freedom" becomes the prime consideration?

If our principles are clear and clearly brought out, we can handle the particular details much more effectively. And rather than merely knocking aside all the stones thrown at us, perhaps, with God's help, we could show reason why they should stop throwing stones and maybe even consider the Church as the one means to be truly free. The Catholic is the freest of men, for it is the truth that makes us free!

It's Different in A Pinch

Daniel A. Lord, S.J.

A lapse can be tragic —or amusing

THE taxicab in which my friend and I were traveling to the station approached the intersection. Just ahead of us we saw the careless driver shoot his car out of a side street. Our taxi driver saw him too, jammed the brakes, and skidded. With calm clarity I knew that we were going to crash. I braced myself and caught the handles on the side of the car. My reflexes were swift and involuntary; when we smashed into the other car, I found myself singularly self-possessed and wondering just how hard we would hit. There were the impact, the forward lurch, the screech of tortured tires . . . and we had stopped, unharmed and really not too badly shaken.

"Hurt?" I asked my friend.

He considered for a moment before he answered. Then with just a trace of hesitation he said, "Not a bit." We sat gathering our wits as the crowd rushed down upon us—the crowd that rises out of nowhere at the sound of any accident. Then my friend said, quietly, "But I'm scared now—oh, not by the accident, but by a frightening realization: I knew we were going to crash, and I didn't make an act of contrition."

And I had to confess that neither had I.

When any well-intentioned but unfortunate author has written a Catholic novel, it is customary for the critics to go through the story with a microscope in order to note all the mistakes and oversights that the writer may have made: "Obviously the author knows little about his faith . . . The priest is dressed in green vestments during the Paschal Season . . . His car skids down the road; and though there are three passengers in it, he never thinks to give absolution . . . I looked up that particular date and learned that it was an Ember day, a day of fast and abstinence; and lo and behold! this so-called Catholic author has his heroine eating meat on that day, a large juicy steak paid for by her boy friend."

Slips? Undoubtedly. And undoubtedly anyone writing on a Catholic theme is going to make those slips. Ours is an elaborate and intricate religion, about which the wisest and best informed are going to make plenty of mistakes. One large Catholic fraternal organization has among its preliminaries for membership an impromptu catechism examination; it is the standing joke of the organization that some of the worst showings in that test are made by priests. They know their re-

ligion and teach it to others. But they can be tripped up on answers to questions like "Name the second commandment of the Church." . . . "If you entered a Church while Mass was in progress and the priest was praying at the epistle side, how could you tell whether it was the beginning of Mass or the end of Mass?" Though priests say Mass with more than fair regularity, I've seen them completely stymied by that second question.

We Forget So Easily

The fact is that "in a pinch" we are likely to forget a lot of important things. In quick flashes of emergencies, real-life characters play parts quite out of their official roles. Fear, the unexpected, suddenness have strange effects upon us mercurial mortals. And my personal experience has taught me to be tolerant of authors who make occasional mistakes where Catholic procedure is concerned.

I had been ordained only a few days when I was returning from the first Mass of a close friend. The car in which I was riding made a head-on collision with another car. I was still youthfully conscious of my priestly powers. Indeed on the very day of my ordination I had given my first absolution, a conditional absolution that I directed from the streetcar in which I was riding to the scene of an auto accident along the main highway. I wasn't sure that anyone was hurt, but I was taking no chances.

But in that head-on collision not only did I myself fail to make an act of contrition, but I forgot all about the other passengers in the car; I did not lift my recently anointed hand to give them absolution. In a novel a priest who acted in so unpriestly a fashion would be condemned by the meticulous critics as untrue to his profession.

Apparently the human mind is very limited in the number of emotions it can entertain at one time. Just once in my life I overturned completely an automobile I was driving. I was with a party of friends, and we were going along a main highway. A sudden summer rain drenched the road ahead. The tires picked up the oil and grease of the road, and the car spun completely around and dropped over an embankment, where it landed upside down on a pile of refuse and junk—the most important item of which was providentially a bedspring. The spot seemed designed by some gracious guardian angel for our somersault.

When we crawled out of the car, all of us absolutely unharmed, I examined my conscience—and those of my friends.

"Did all of you know we were turning over?"

They did.

"Were you afraid?"

Strangely enough, they weren't. There had been no dramatic screams, no horror-struck feel-

ings of inevitable peril . . . just a calm interest in the amazing fact that on a highway our car had done a pirouette and then a high dive into space.

"Did any of you make an act of contrition?"

They were all Catholics, and sheepishly they shook their heads in negation.

"Cheer up," I said, taking the major share of the blame, "I didn't think to give you absolution. I just hung onto the wheel and wondered very impersonally whether we were going to be killed."

From that time on I have practiced the habit of generosity with my conditional absolutions. If I see any vestige of an accident, I use the conditional formula; I believe that God would prefer an absolution to be wasted than not to have been given.

Yet now and again one misses out.

When the great play "Shadow and Substance" was touring the country some years back, the critics, who had the Catholic sense of what authors fail to do, had one egregious chance to scorn and ridicule. In the last act, the heroine dies in the parlor of the priests' rectory. Two priests are present, and neither of them gives her the last sacraments. I argued with some of the critics—perhaps not too reasonably—that both priests knew that she had just returned from Mass and had received Holy Communion and was, as far as anyone could possibly guarantee, in the state of grace. The critics scorned my apology for the fictional priests and questioned the author's Catholicity.

Some months later I sat next to a saintly bishop. He told me the story of a famous dinner during the course of which almost two hundred bishops and monsignori were poisoned by an anarchistic chef. The banquet was given to honor a great church dignitary and was attended solely by clerics. So the chef (he escaped and was never captured) thought it an excellent chance to wipe out a large sector of the Catholic clergy. None of the banqueters died, and with the lapse of time the story has developed some features of comedy. My narrator, a bishop with a keen sense of humor, told me the story in detail, even to how the banquet hall suddenly became a hospital ward, the hundred and more purple-clad figures lying about the great dining hall and in apparent danger of death.

I asked him a simple question: "Who among those of you who were not sick remembered to give the last sacraments and absolution to the others?"

The bishop paused in surprise, hesitated, and then said, in what came close to complete bewilderment, "Upon my word I don't remember that any of us did. I know that I didn't, and I can't recall seeing anyone else do it either."

About a hundred great dig-

nitaries of the Catholic Church surrounded by another hundred important clerics, death apparently stalking their midst, and no one—as far as my bishop friend could recall—had thought of administering either absolution or the last rites.

If the priests of "Shadow and Substance" were jolted by the sudden illness of the heroine into forgetfulness of their official duties, apparently bishops and monsignori under the impact of fear and surprise could in real life be just as absent-minded.

But if you are writing or planning to write a Catholic novel or short story, I strongly advise you to be sure that all your characters receive the last sacraments—if you don't want the critics to get you.

Because this subject has always interested me considerably, I have asked many of my priest friends who have been involved in accidents what they recall of their reactions. One excellent priest who lives very close to God told me of the accident he experienced while he was driving with his dear old father and mother and a younger brother and sister. Their car veered off the road, plunged down the side of a soft shoulder, and slowly collapsed — like some wounded elephant or dying hippo —on its side.

"When we climbed out, painfully and in considerable terror," he told me, "I realized that I had not made an act of contrition and had not given absolution. I apologized shamefacedly to the family. It was my dad however who put the final touch of shame into my soul. 'When I'm driving with anyone,' he said, quietly, 'I don't wait for an accident; I make an act of contrition every hour.'

Believe me, if you write Catholic fiction in any form, you're bound to slip up. Perhaps if the critics wrote some more creative stuff and less analytic stuff, they wouldn't because of some unintended boner think the author a religious ignoramus or the story decidely un-Catholic.

In my writing youth—long after I was a Jesuit and a fairly well-educated cleric—I wrote a story the plot of which revolved about an elaborate turkey dinner given by my Catholic heroine to her Catholic suitor. I wrote and rewrote the story. It was read by two Jesuit censors required by Jesuit rule. I sold the story to a Catholic editor, who went over it carefully before he published it in his Christmas issue . . . and was ultimately showered with abuse by the readers.

For the heroine, Catholic though she was, had served the dinner of turkey, baked ham, and mincemeat pie to her suitor . . . on Christmas Eve.

Not I—the Jesuit author—the Jesuit censors, nor the priest editor had remembered that Christmas Eve is a day of fast and abstinence. But the critics spotted it and potshot both the editor and me.

Code and Cult

St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, California

P. J. Lydon, S.T.D.

ARE there any recent books on conversions to the Church?

Yes, see O'Brien: "Winning Converts," "The Road to Damascus," "Where I Found Christ"; Lamping: "Through Hundred Gates," etc. We have over a hundred thousand converts a year in this country, but the number should be much more. Have you an Inquiry Class?

How is bigotry defined?

Here is Cardinal Newman's definition: "Bigotry is the infliction of our own unproved First Principles on others and the treating of others with scorn and hatred for not accepting them." Ignorance is the cause of very much of the hatred of the Church. Our Catholic people must be the instructors of their non-Catholic neighbors. Our own sermons must be more instructive. We need a more intelligent and zealous laity. Newman said in his "Present Position of Catholics in England" (1851): "I want a laity, not arrogant, not rash, not disputatious . . . but men who know their religion and who can give an account of it . . ." "Ignorance is the root of all littleness."

Is there any new book for young people preparing to marry?

Yes, there are many pamphlets and books. (Ask at your Catholic book store.) I recommend especially "Cana Is Forever," by Fr. Doyle (1949).

Why is divorce so common in the U.S.A.?

Mostly for *moral reasons:* 1) Meddling relatives; 2) Birth-control—disgust; 3) Disappointment, boredom; 4) Hasty marriages; 5) Lack of religion—mixed marriages (average 26% in U.S.A., 1947); 6) Jealousy; 7) Emotional, physical, intellectual and vocational immaturity; 8) Nagging by wife or husband; 9) The triangle (adultery); 10) Sex ignorance; 11) Low mentality; 12) Drink (husband or wife).

Is it not true that there is sometimes too much delay in deciding marriage cases or in sending cases to Rome?

There are cases of this kind. The mind of the Church is that cases should not be needlessly held up. Culpable delay with damage to souls may be punished (Can. 1625). The libellus or petition should be accepted or rejected, not by the auditor (Can. 1582), but by the tribunal as soon as possible (Cans. 1709-1710—Doheny I, 1948, p. 209). There are cases, however, which cannot be decided for lack of any evidence except the word of the parties or because the cause given is clearly not sufficient to

make a marriage null (Instructio, 1936, Art. 64).

Is Rhythm to be recommended absolutely?

No. "Sometimes it is no sin, sometimes a venial sin, sometimes a mortal sin" ("Cana Is Forever," p. 197). It depends on circumstances and motives. The use of this principle does not frustrate the act as does onanism and hence it is not wrong "in se." When used there must be a good reason, not mere selfishness, and perfect agreement on both sides, and no grave danger of sin because conjugal relations take place only within the sterile period.

I have received a four-page leaflet from Wisconsin concerning alleged appearances of the Blessed Virgin to a woman there. It bears no "Nihil Obstat" nor "Imprimatur."

Many of us received the same leaflets. The messages do not appear to be at all true or supernatural. Although it might be said that sending the leaflets through the mail is not *publishing* them, yet it is certainly against the spirit of the law to do so without ecclesiastical approval (Can. 1399, n. 5).

If a non-Catholic husband gravely threatens his wife unless she consents to an abortion, does she sin by yielding and does she incur censure?

She sins gravely since abortion is an intrinsically evil act and always grave. Other examples would be perjury, adultery, etc. However, in these circumstances she does not incur the excommunication of Can. 2350 since the act elicited under grave fear in this case does not tend to the contempt of the faith or of ecclesiastical authority nor to the public harm of souls according to Can. 2229, sec. 3, n. 3 (Commission of Interpretation, Dec. 30, 1937).

If the First Friday falls on Good Friday is the series of nine Fridays interrupted so that a person must begin the series again?

This latter is the better and safer opinion. It is the view of the New York office and of some other authorities. The faithful wish to be on the safe side.

Are there four or only three conditions understood by the clause "under the usual conditions" for plenary indulgences?

The official book "Preces et Pia Opera" (1938), p. viii, enumerates four: Confession, Communion, visit to a church, and prayer for the intentions of the Pope. When a person receives the Sacraments in a church, he fulfills the condition requiring "visitatio ecclesiae" without a special visit. Sometimes, by way of exception, a plenary indulgence may be gained without fulfilling all four, for example, the Way of the Cross.

Samson used the jawbone of an ass to end a war. To-day, that weapon is used to start one.—Irish Baker.

Sermon Suggestions

For the month of December ✠ *J. F. Noll, D.D.*

How Will You Fare In Judgment?

December 3, 1950

Evil so abounds in the world that everyone who seriously contemplates it must shudder with fear for society's future and for the ultimate fate of most men. But since evil does not exist outside of evil people, there would be hope for society and mankind if people would only begin to square their lives with the demands of God.

(1) Let us take at least a passing glance at the picture of life in the United States, and note the degree to which Catholics form a part of the picture. This done, we shall consider what Catholics can and must do to alter that picture. Here is what we see:

Thirty million American children, educated during a period of twelve years, at an annual cost of $100.00 each, deprived altogether of that knowledge which Christ calls "eternal life," learning not even the ABC's of religion, or of moral principles, and producing quite logically:

The 70,000,000 of our countrymen who are as pagan in God's eyes as the people in dark Africa, unbaptized, and as illiterate as they concerning God, Christ, God's Church, His plan of salvation, the Ten Commandments, the Sacraments. This lack of knowledge of God's laws and prohibitions is, in turn, largely responsible for the 10,000,000 of remarried divorcees, whom Christ and His Apostles were wont to brand with the loathsome name "adulterer."

The prisons filled to overflowing with juvenile criminals, the largest group being comprised of those who have been out of High School only one year.

Printing presses working overtime to supply demoralizing reading matter to one-half the homes in the nation, magazines displayed before everyone's gaze from more than 250,000 racks and newsstands, all calculated to deaden whatever moral sense their readers have had.

(2) To what extent are Catholics affected by the irreligion, immorality and other pagan influences amid which they live? They are tremendously affected in an adverse way. This is so patent to their spiritual superiors and guides that these are greatly worried. Catholics, being better instructed, sin more grievously than others when they are dishonest or intemperate, when they desecrate the Sunday and neglect prayers, when they are unclean and untruthful in speech, when they walk into moral danger, and especially when they in any manner violate chastity.

When Catholics, pledged to live as soldiers of Christ, adopt the vices or even the worldly practices of those who were never instructed in God's laws, they become traitors

to Christ, a scandal to others, and impede the reform of society.

Many Catholics of means live like the most worldly of the worldly. Their standards are no different. Mammon is their God. They usually give less to the cause of religion and charity than do their non-Catholic associates, while they spend lavishly for pleasure and entertainment.

Catholic politicians, generally speaking, are little different from those who profess no religion. They have often brought discredit on their Church and shocked their co-religionists by accepting bribes, by using their power for selfish purposes rather than for the benefit of those whom they were elected to serve.

Catholic youths, instructed and trained for leadership among those of their age-group, too often forget their lessons and begin to follow. They ape the conduct of those who were never under the slightest religious influence.

Every Catholic should take delight in elevating the standards of others rather than in surrendering to their lower standards. It is also every Catholic's duty to do so.

(3) This lesson would be better understood if you would visualize a return from the grave of any close relative — father, mother, brother, sister, son or daughter. How differently would each of them live if he or she were given a new chance!

How closely would a parent, returned from the dead, work with the Church and school for the preservation of innocence in his children, for their protection from the corrupting influences of the pagan-minded world! What encouraging example of spiritual living such a parent would set to his children!

How convinced would the rich be that their money should be regarded as trust, to be used, in large part, for the furtherance of the great works of God, and of the eternal interests of their fellows!

How much more concerned all would be to "store up for themselves treasures in Heaven" for their everlasting enjoyment!

If many of your departed loved ones lived a most worldly life, you should not soon discontinue your prayers for their souls.

The Catholic will be judged according to his closer relationship to God, according to his pledges to Christ, according to his greater knowledge of his duties. It is extremely risky, not to say contemptible and disloyal to God for the Catholic to ape the conduct of worldly and sinful people.

Conclusion: Start this new Ecclesiastical year right. During Advent prepare seriously for Christmas, and then convert the Holy Year, as it will be extended to our country, into one of reparation for your own and others' sins, and of growth in spiritual and supernatural living.

Ancient Pagans Teach A Lesson

December 10, 1950

The pagan Romans followed principles which, in many respects, were sounder than those to which the statesmen of our day are committed. Engraved in brass they declared the supreme law of the

Republic to be the "welfare of the people": "Salus populi suprema lex esto." That means "Let the welfare of the people be the sovereign law."

(1) In modern paganism, whether in China, Japan, India, or the new paganism of Russia, there has been little concern "for the welfare of the people." Even in our own country, our statesmen have been thinking chiefly of the welfare of groups who, banded together politically, are able by their votes to elect or retire members of Senate and Congress and even the President.

But it is not our intention to deliver a political sermon. What we have in mind is that in every man's heart there should be engraved the motto "the salvation of my immortal soul is the sovereign law." Almighty God had intended that our soul's salvation should be our sovereign law, but not even the first human pair, with whom God personally communicated, gave heed to it. Since Adam was actually on trial for the entire human race, and disregarded direct orders from Heaven, all mankind shared in his guilt.

However, God still continued to love the human race with an infinite love. He sent His beloved Son from Heaven to earth to make such reparation as would open again the gates of heaven to mankind. He certainly emphasized in His teaching and by his example that the salvation of one's soul should be his sovereign law. Did He not ask, "What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?" And again, "What will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

(2) As long as we live in this world we are in danger of losing our soul. If we should lose it, we lose everything. If we lose our home, it is possible to build another. If we lose a friend we can find a second one. If we lose an eye or a hand, we still have one to help us. But we have but one soul. If this be lost, it is irretrievable, for "out of hell there is no redemption."

You hear much about Christ's sermon on the Mount. Some see in it only emphasis on the Golden Rule, which, on another occasion, Jesus said, is observed even by the heathens. Christ's emphasis was placed on the words "seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice."

If you, a sinner, take the salvation of your soul lightly, think of St. John the Baptist, sanctified even before his birth in his mother's womb. He passed 25 years in solitude which he devoted to a severe penitential life. See St. Paul, called by Christ "a vessel of election," "chastizing his body and keeping it under subjection." See St. Augustine, who had been a teacher after his conversion, refuse longer to teach rhetoric or profane learning lest he should give less attention to his soul.

There are 1440 minutes in every day. How many of these are given to prayer and reflection? How many of them are devoted to the performance of good works?

There are 168 hours in a week. Yet you feel that you do your full duty to Almighty God by giving one hour to His service on Sunday. How many of you would do that if you were not compelled to by one of the Commandments?

(3) You cannot save yourself apart from God's help. It is very

difficult to save your soul even with the help of Christ's Sacraments which He committed to His Church, "The Sacraments are for these divine ordinances. They were instituted for you.

According to a motto of the Church. "the Sacraments are for men." Some of them remit your sins upon repentance. All of them are sources of grace which unite you closely to God, which bring God Himself into your souls. It is a great privilege to receive them. Therefore, you should avail yourself of this privilege and receive them frequently.

Instead of doing good merely according to a minimum schedule or haphazardly, why not devise a daily schedule in which will be included, besides a short morning and evening prayer, a little spiritual reading? Why not spend a couple of minutes every day in the examination of your conscience and in the renewal of your good resolutions? That practice would help keep you very straight and would suggest to you certain good things which you should seek to foster.

Once you become enthusiastic over the sanctification of your own soul, you will become an apostle for the faith quite automatically. That is what is needed today: lay apostles for the promotion of the cause of Christ, the winning for Him of friends and close associates.

Conclusion: Why not start this during Advent? If you should do this persistently for a month, you will have acquired a habit which will make you happy and make it easy for you to persevere. A good way to begin is by becoming a Crusader for God.

Prepare For Christmas

December 17, 1950

As we prepare for Christmas we should not overlook some of the lessons taught by the gospel story of the Nativity.

(1) We think first of the lowly, humble birth of the Son of God, Who had left His glory in Heaven to make infinite reparation for the sins of mankind. Although He was generally unobserved by the people of the little town of Bethlehem, the inhabitants of Heaven came down to earth with Him. There was first the angel who appeared not to King Herod, not to the Scribes and Pharisees, not to the rich and powerful, but to the illiterate, simple-minded shepherds, who were spending the night, watching their sheep on the hillside. Then followed "a multitude of the heavenly host" declaring, in chant, the purpose of the Incarnation. It was to give "**glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will.**"

It was the first time that God had been honored on earth in an infinite manner, as He deserved to be. He could not bring peace to men of "bad will," because true peace consists in union of the human person with God; it exists in the heart, and hence can be truly enjoyed only by men of "good will."

We are reminded of the close association among Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Because God joined them together they must never be sepa-

rated. They are not separated in the Catholic Church, but outside the Catholic Church Mary and Joseph are utterly ignored, when they are not actually repudiated.

(2) Outside a few Episcopalian churches in the United States there are no Protestant churches dedicated to Mary or Joseph, while many are named after St. Paul, St. Luke, St. Mark — rarely after St. Peter either, although he was made the prince of the Apostles, the vicegerent or successor of Christ as the Visible Head of the Church on earth.

Surely Jesus will not excuse this attitude of prejudice towards His own mother, or foster father, or towards His own personal representative. One cannot truly love Jesus unless he loves what Jesus loved, and He loved Mary above all persons, and Joseph next. He was, through the thirty years of His home life, "subject to them." She was not only with Him at His birth, but stood before His cross, and in his dying moments Jesus bequeathed her to all of us as our mother.

Joseph was dead at that time, or Jesus surely would have had something to say to him or about him. The Church has selected him as her universal protector, since Christ had chosen him as His own personal protector during His infant and boy life.

"What God has joined together, let no man put asunder" holds here as it is supposed to hold in relation to marriage.

(3) In his gospel St. John speaks of those who receive Christ, and also of those who, by accepting Him, "receive power to become the Sons of God." They do not become sons of God by accepting Him as their personal Saviour but by "being born of God." Jesus tells us, through St. John, that we must "be born again of water and the Holy Spirit" if we would enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, even if we do otherwise acknowledge Christ as our Saviour and revere Him as God.

There are many people of "good will" outside the Catholic Church who would only need to know the Church to embrace it. Many of them have been reared in prejudice which separates Mary from Christ, which has indoctrinated millions with calumnies about the Church —which Christ indentifies with Himself, which is continuing His ministry on earth, which is empowered to forgive the repentant sinner in God's name, and to feed souls on the precious Body and Blood through which Christ redeemed the world.

Conclusion: Pray for such people. If you acquaint them with the Church you are actually acquainting them better with Christ. That would constitute a wonderful Christmas present for Him and them.

Consolation To The Afflicted

December 24, 1950

Archbishop Saliege of Toulouse, France, gained the reputation during the war of the "fighting Archbishop." He has since been made Cardinal. He did his utmost to keep the disheartened people of France trustful in God, and to arouse them to more intense spirituality. He

wrote as follows in a Christmas letter in 1942:

"Let all of us together make a pilgrimage to the crib of Bethlehem. What poverty, what wretchedness, what apparent powerlessness! Nothing, it seems, could be weaker than this Infant who has just been born, yet at the same time, nothing is stronger. It is a beginning, a renewal, God is made man. Come, let us adore Him. Venite adoremus.

"He will grow. He will teach. He will die. He will rise again. His resurrection shall be the pledge of ours. Henceforth the years shall be counted from His birth. The centuries shall be divided before and after the birth of Jesus Christ.

(1) "No one will be loved as Jesus has been loved, and He is loved. Men will predict the end of His kingdom. Nations shall separate themselves from Him, and assure for themselves only the horror of war. No true progress of humanity can spurn Him. If men fail to take Him into account, their material progress will end only in destruction and death.

"What has Germany gained by denying Him? What has France herself gained—I speak of bureaucratic France—in organizing the life of the nation without Him?"

By his observations the Cardinal reminded the hungry and destitute people of France that they were not quite as poor as was Christ on the day of His birth, and that His poverty was voluntarily chosen in preference to richness, which, as God, He certainly could have had in abundance.

He points out that just as Jesus has been revered and loved by hundreds of millions so, today, other millions have been led away from Him by irreligious rulers of modern times.

America is also being led away from Him by having Him put out of the schools, by having Him attacked in colleges and universities, by driving Him out of the field of charity which, from the day of His coming until recent years, was His sole field.

(2) The Archbishop convoked a convention of the Young Christian Workers (Jocists) on June 21, 1942, and to his amazement 20,000 young people gathered together in the Stadium at Toulouse to exhibit their readiness to bring France back to Christ, both by their good Christian example and by conversions through personal contacts.

Equally brave, militant and apostolic were the Cardinal and the Archbishops, the many Bishops and hundreds of priests now in prison, or in martyrs' graves behind the Iron Curtain. Persecution of the church, the suppression of the Catholic press, the closing of schools, in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Croatia, has had the effect of bringing 90 per cent of the Catholics closer to God. It has not made them militant in action because they are surrounded by the government's armed police, against whom they would be powerless.

(3) During this Holy Year not merely 20,000, but many millions of Catholics should unite to bring Christ back to our own dear country. We can do this by letting our fellows know, through our example, that we can keep the Commandments, can live cleanly and purely, and be made happy by it.

We belong to the Church Militant and the time to be militant is when we are at peace, when we are able

to unite to promote by work, by example, by our literature, the cause of Him who came down from Heaven to be "the light of the world."

Most of our countrymen, having no religion in the home, never having received any religious instruction in the schools, need to be shown that the Christian code can be lived. They need our literature to learn all that they can about God, about Christ, about the nature for its attainment.

Conclusion: If you, on Christmas Day, would make an offering which would really be a Christmas present to Jesus, you should offer yourself to this work of promoting religion and morality by personal practice, and by handing to some non-Catholic friend or neighbor your paper after you will have perused it thoroughly yourself. Do not fail to read every one of the instructive articles in your Catholic paper because you might otherwise miss the ones which will be most helpful to you in this apostolate.

Whence True Peace?

December 31, 1950

The most powerful ruler of our times, only a few years ago, imitating King Herod, issued an edict to outlaw Christ and to destroy His religion. That man is idolized more than any other by our fellowmen. That man is the only one left of the original war lords. Hitler is gone; Mussolini is gone; Roosevelt is gone; Hirohito is gone; and Churchill has been deposed. In bowing to Stalin, His arch-enemy, people insult Christ, the Prince of Peace, and one's very religious instinct prompts him to fear that the world has not yet arrived at the beginning of peace.

(1) In the second Psalm David represents the princes of the world rising up against God and against His Christ, and as declaring: "Let us break their bonds and let us cast aside their yoke." Then David observes: "He Who dwells in the Heavens will scoff at them and will speak to them in His anger." Then he gives this advice to Kings: "And now kings understand: receive instruction you who judge the earth. Serve the Lord in fear; take hold of discipline lest the Lord become incensed."

Lord Halifax, former British Ambassador to the United States, has said: "In the domestic field of a country which chooses to keep its civilization Christian, there is no more urgent task in these days than to restore Christian education to the place it ought never to have lost."

He quoted Alfred Noyes as saying that the people of the world are repeating the words of the women at the sepuchre: "They have taken away Our Lord and we know not where they have laid Him."

Be strong and live your faith openly and boldly, as a rebuke to the millions who are losing it. Follow St. Paul's Christmas advice and "live soberly and justly and godly" as a rebuke to those who make light of God's laws.

(2) Material-minded, political-minded, selfish-minded, or half-infidel statesmen will never be able

to establish true peace in this world. It can come only from God, because peace, like justice, of which it is the child, belongs to the moral order. Since true peace lodges in the heart, it cannot be enforced by a statute, it cannot be established by police control alone. We who know this only too well, we followers of Christ, who are obligated to be the "light of the world," should follow the advice given by St. Paul: "These things speak and exhort, in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

The scene in the crib radiates peace, despite its humble setting. The poverty of the Holy Family does not prevent the Babe from blessing and does not take any joy from the hearts of Joseph and Mary. Angels sing and, in their name, one of them promulgates Christ's peace, conditioned on good will, to the entire world.

Let us pray that the entire world may, by the light of Bethlehem's star, imitate the Magi and the shepherds who said to one another: "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass."

Let us, before the crib, pray to the Divine Babe to show mercy to the present-day world, as he did on the day of his coming.

(3) Does not St. John tell us: "He was the true light, Who enlightens every man that comes into this world"? Weren't we assured from Heaven by an angel that God's peace is offered only to "men of good will"? Therefore the chief need of the world at this moment is to have bad will, implanted in the hearts of everybody through propaganda, uprooted. The armed conflicts in Korea, Iran, Iraq, Yugoslavia, East Germany, were provoked by false, and therefore, bad will propaganda.

Face to face with the three holiest persons the world ever beheld at one time, Jesus and Mary and Joseph, let us implore the graces for our own life's direction and for the guidance of those who will determine the future destiny of the world, who now "do not know the things which are to their peace." The saints of all times would confirm the verdict of the Apostle that "the peace of Christ surpasses all understanding."

Let us individually try to acquire that peace "which the world cannot give" by "denying ourselves ungodliness and worldly desires." Then let us do what is in our power to lead others to share that same peace. To bring that kind of peace into the world was the purpose of Christ's coming. He thought of it as His best Christmas gift to all men, and we could do no greater favor for our friends than divert their attention from "worldly desires" to the joy of spiritual living.

Conclusion: That Christ's peace may come to you and yours, to our beloved country and to the entire world is our own fervent prayer on this eve of a new year.

East and West

In the West we stand, millions of us, confused and listless; ethics without zeal. In the East, behind the Iron Curtain, there stand millions of armed fanatics: zeal without ethics.

—**Fulton Oursler.**

MAGAZINES DISAPPROVED

by the

National Organization Of Decent Literature

DECEMBER, 1950

PUBLICATIONS FOUND OBJECTIONABLE BY THE DECENCY COMMITTEE

COMIC BOOKS

All True Crime
Amazing Adventures
Amazing Detective
Beyond
Blackhawk
Cowboy Love
Crime and Punishment
Crime Detective
Crime Exposed
Crime Fighters
Darling Romance
Famous Love
Fight
Girl Comics
Headline Comics
I Loved
Jesse James
Love
Love at First Sight
Loveland
Love Memories
Lovers
Love Mystery
Love Romances
Love Tales
Man Comics
Marvel Tales
Modern Comics
Movie Love
Penalty
Pictorial Romances
Planet Comics
Police Comics
Range Romances
Real Clue
Real Life Secrets
Real Love
Revealing Romances
Romance Diary
Romantic Confessions
Romantic Thrills
Romantic Western
Spectacular Adventure
Suspense
Tales from the Crypt
Teen-age Romances
The Perfect Crime
The Saint Detective Cases
True Crime Comics
True Love
Underworld Detective
Western Crime Busters
Western Gunsmoke
Western Life Romances
Western True Comics

POCKET-SIZE BOOKS

AVON PUBLICATIONS
Amboy Dukes
Don Juan
End as a Man
Europa
Hope of Heaven
Kept Woman
Midsummer Passion
Never Come Morning
Tawny
The Midsummer Fires
The Old Goat
The Servant

BANTAM PUBLICATIONS
Angel's Camp
Lady Godiva and Master Tom
The Chinese Room
The Heller
The Scandels of Clochemerle
The Spring Begins
Thieves Market

DELL PUBLICATIONS
Celeste, The Gold Coast Virgin
Gone to Earth
Ladies in Hades
Leave Cancelled
Night and the City
Showdown
Stag Night
To a God Unknown

GOLD MEDAL PUBLICATIONS
I'll Find You
The Brass Cupcake

HILLMAN PUBLICATIONS
The Physiology of Love

LION PUBLICATIONS
Continental Touch
Indiscreet Confessions
Intimate Stranger
Lustful Ape
Outward Room
Small Back Room
The French Touch
Twilight Men

PERMA PUBLICATIONS
Modern Sex Life

POCKET BOOK PUBLICATIONS
Black Jade
Decameron
Did She Fall
Disposing of Henry
Freund, His Dreams and Sex Theories
Kitty
Madam Bovary
Nana
Rampart Street
Rain in the Doorway
Skin and Bones
Tales of the South Pacific
The Bishop's Jaegers
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List prepared by the Chicago Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women, 506 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago 5, Ill., and edited by the national office of the N. O. D. L.

Holly

The use of holly as a Christmas decoration is an old one, some authorities contending that it goes back hundreds of years, and others that it goes back even to the early days of Christianity.

One of the legends woven around this plant is this:

On Christmas night, after the birth of the Christ Child, St. Joseph noticed a plant growing outside the cave that afforded the only shelter for the Holy Family.

He plucked a branch of it and brought it to the Blessed Virgin. The legend adds that, noting the thornlike edges of the plant's leaf and its blood-red berries, the Blessed Mother had in that moment a vision of the suffering her Son was to endure in the years to come.—**Irish Weekly.**

Book Reviews

Psychiatry and Asceticism

Felix D. Duffey, C.S.C.

B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, Missouri, pp. 132; $2.00.

THE appearance of this book, written by a man who has had wide experience in directing many souls to God, is a good sign. It points to the fact that the priest is becoming aware of the important role that Christian asceticism plays in maintaining the mental equilibrium of man.

There can be successful collaboration between priest and psychiatrist, in certain cases, inasmuch as both men work in the same sphere, but from a different viewpoint. The priest regards his penitent, often ill spiritually, as a Christian whom he directs to heaven; while the psychiatrist sees in his patient a psychopathic person whom it is his business to heal. Both men ordinarily meet the same psychic symptoms.

The priest will find this book interesting, at times quite inspiring, despite the tedium of reading some rather lengthy quotations. Especially interesting, and rather fresh in approach is the chapter, the Psychology of Mental Prayer. It is here that the author does himself proud. He deserves warm congratulations for this contribution, as he certainly does for the chapter, the Psychology of Mortification.

But the reputable Catholic psychiatrist, on the other hand, will find little encouragement in the book. The author, though avowing that he has "no quarrel with the legitimate findings of any legitimate science," conveys the impression that he does condemn the science of psychiatry after all. This conclusion is unavoidable, though Father Duffey gladly would have it otherwise.

The author definitely has a quarrel with the psychoanalysts. His indignation at the sweeping mystic claims of some is warranted. But not all psychiatrists are psychoanalysts, and when the author condemns the science of psychiatry as a whole because of the antics of pompous psychoanalysts, his conclusions can hardly be sustained.

There are forms of psychotherapy other than psychoanalysis which are successfully employed by many reputable Catholic psychiatrists with happy results; as, for instance, the method used by the distinguished Dr. Rudolph Allers, or the one created by the ingenious Dr. Roger Vittoz, of Lausanne, which in the opinion and experience of the present reviewer is one of the most efficacious in realizing a complete cure of a psychopathic case of scrupulosity. Many forms of psychoneurosis can be cured, not necessarily by asceticism, but by a thorough mental treatment.—Ernest F. Latko, O.F.M.

Commentarium In Codicem Iuris Canonici

P. Herebertus Jone, O.F.M. Cap.

Officena Libaria F. Schoningh, Paderborn, 1950, pp. 627.

IN the current spate of canonical commentaries and texts, Fr. Jone's Commentarium deserves to

occupy a prominent place. Instead of translating the canons, the author puts them into his own words and thus endeavors to clarify their compact language. His comments on each cannon are necessarily brief but solid. Disclaiming any intention to produce a scientific treatise, Fr. Jone strives to present the genuine meaning of the canons as applied to everyday usage and ordinary requirements.

There are copious references to contemporary authors, pertinent canonical magazine articles, and the latest decisions of the Holy See. The type is clear and neat, and important points to be remembered are in heavier print.

While the work is primarily a text book, the author has felt it necessary to give detailed attention, here and there, to what he feels, are widespread misconceptions, sponsored by locally accepted authors whose unproved opinions are in danger of affecting common doctrine. Nor is he averse to elaborating some controverted points, a fact illustrated by his defense of the position that laymen do use ecclesiastical jurisdiction in some instances.

An introductory chapter, containing a history of Canon Law, its development and the process of its codification would enhance the usefulness of the work. — Charles A. Kerin, S.S., J.C.D.

The Common Man and Other Essays

By G. K. Chesterton

New York, Sheed & Ward, $3.00.

THE great Samuel Johnson was wont to say to Boswell that "no man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money." Such saying shows that the dear Doctor was not infallible. For no man living by his pen was ever so careless as G. K. Chesterton about placing his work to financial advantage. And Chesterton was no blockhead. Although perhaps not aware of it he was one of the foremost writers of his day: "He was one of the Big Four," W. L. Phelps once told me. Ever prodigal of his gifts, when Chesterton died in 1936 numberless were the literary items that he had failed or forgotten to put on the market. "Trifles" they were to him; tremendous trifles they are to us and will be to posterity. The least that we may and must say of them is that they represent Chesterton at his best. And "at his best he is unsurpassed by any essayist of the century."

In the present volume we have a collection of those essays: forty-four of them and they are of great variety. Whether they deal with literature, sociology, or religion, they have each of them epigrammatic sentences which seem destined to live until end be ended and until ceasing cease, so truly sincere is their concept, so fearless is their expression. All the sketches are as readable as they are relishable and reliable. Notable specially are those "On Reading," "What Novelties Are For," "The Hound of Heaven," "A Tale of Two Cities," "The Dangers of Necromancy," "The Romance of a Rascal," "The Real Dr. Johnson," "God and Goods," "Praying for Patriotism," "The New Groove," "Walter de la Mare," "Books for Boys," "The Epitaph of Pierpont Morgan," "Consulting the Encyclopedia," "If I Had Only One Sermon to Preach"

and "If Don Juan Had Married Queen of Scots." Especially remarkable is the study on "A Midsummer Night's Dream" which gives us a notion of what richness would have been in that book on Shakespeare which Chesterton contracted to write but never wrote.

The place of Chesterton in English literature is far from being settled. Undoubtedly he uses and abuses too often the dangerous tenet called paradox. His paradoxes make noise like fireworks, and fireworks are seldom musical. He however defines them as "Truth standing on her feet to attract attention." It may so happen that the present incidental posthumous volume may help the critics to decide on what niche of the temple his name is to be engraved.—J. M. Lelan, Ph.D.

Saint Teresa of Jesus
R. P. Silverio de Santa Teresa, O.D.C.
Newman Bookshop, Westminster, Md., 1950, pp. xi 191, $2.50.

Saint Teresa of Jesus
Father Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, O.C.D.
Newman Press, Westminster, Md., 1949, pp. xii 123, $2.00.

Selected Writings of Saint Teresa of Avila
William J. Doheny, C.S.C., J.U.D.
Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, Wis., 1950, xxxv 443, Index, $5.00.

THESE three works constitute a splendid introduction to a serious study of Saint Teresa of Avila and her teachings. Each admirably fulfils its purpose and leads the reader by advancing steps into the heart of Teresian teaching. Father Silverio, the editor of the most authentic collection of the writings of Saint Teresa, ably accomplishes his purpose "to enable those who have no time for lengthy Teresian biographies to become acquainted, in a few hours, with the life and doings of this great saint" (p. vii).

The book is a well-chosen account of the life and many activities of the Mother of Carmel, and though there are much fact and chronology reported, these never become burdensome. The secret is, I think, that the spirit of Saint Teresa is preserved living and vital, and is made to direct and shine through all her actions and journeyings. It is an inspiring introduction to a saint who holds too often some trepidation for the ordinary pilgrim, and an introduction which will whet the appetite for more details both biographically and doctrinally.

This latter appetite will be satisfied by Father Gabriel's book. It too is in the nature of an introduction to Saint Teresa, but to her doctrine and to a systematic study of her writings. Its purpose is to point out the leading strains of thought in the diffuse and at times apparently disordered progress of her words, and from them to construct what the author calls a Teresian synthesis.

This he does well in the chapters entitled "Moral Perfection" and "The Contemplative Ideal," in which he gives the basic points of the saint's teaching on the nature of perfection and of the mystical ideal.

He then carries these principles through an analysis of **The Way of Perfection** and **The Interior Castle**, ending his treatment with a chapter characterizing her teachings as only the expression of her spirit of life best indicated by her title in religion, Teresa of Jesus. He touches on the controversy raging

presently among theologians of the spiritual life concerning the relationship of perfection and infused contemplation, and holds a somewhat middle course as the authentic Teresian and hence Carmelite teaching. His conclusion is (p. 45, n. 75) that according to Saint Teresa mystical contemplation is strictly speaking not necessary to sanctity, but it is nevertheless the highest form of the supernatural life, and normally so, not as something extraordinary or charismatic, but the ordinary term of a completely generous life to which all are called. Admitting all to aspire to mystical contemplation, she concentrates, however, all her immediate preoccupations of soul on the acquiring of the virtues as the disposition usually rewarded by contemplation.

Monsignor Doheny's book is more than merely a compilation of quotations from the saint's works. It is a carefully balanced presentation of her teachings on the theology of the spiritual life, culled expertly, and one gathers, lovingly, from all her writings. It brings together her more important statements on the key principles and practices of the spiritual life, and accomplishes in a practical line by line proof what Father Gabriel has done along broader and more speculative lines. Here we have the chapter and verse for a rounded Teresian synthesis and an answer to any seeming contradictions in her teachings which might be suggested by a separate reading of the individual works.

Together, then, these three books are the solid basis for a study and appreciation of the great Saint of Avila who in God's Providential way is having a spiritual reincarnation in these troubled days so like in material and spiritual devastation to the days of her earthly life.—Bart M. Reilly, S.S.

Directorium Seminariorum

(in Sinis), compiled by the Scheut Fathers under the general editorship of Fr. J. P. Leyssen.

(4500 W. Davis Street) Dallas, Texas, pp. 745, index, $5.00.

THIS work, the editor tells us, grew slowly out of the combined offers of the Scheut Fathers and other missionaries stationed (imprisoned? "bello durante Pekini concentratis") at Pekin during the late war and at the expressed request of His Excellency the Apostolic Delegate to China. It was begun in the spring of 1944 and is the work of many hands, experts in the fields of theology, pedagogy, architecture, and medicine.

Its direct orientation to conditions in China may perhaps limit its applicability to other countries, particularly those of a non-missionary nature, but even these directives will prove of interest as illustrative of conditions sometimes to us curious, and of consequent problems in the Far East.

Nor does the reviewer wish to emphasize this stricture, for the **Directorium** is a mine of valuable information gathered from approved authors, canonical, pastoral and ascetical, collated skillfully and lucidly. The introductory **Bibliagraphia** is of considerable importance and the author's topical arrangement and his careful annotation make primary sources readily available. He covers every conceivable aspect of his subject.

—G. J. G.

No Postponement

U. S. Moral Leadership and the Problem of Racial Minorities
by John LaFarge, S.J.

Longmans, Green & Co., New York, 1950, 246 pp., $3.00.

TIME, the war in Korea, and Mr. Malik at Lake Success have made even more pertinent than the day of its publication this latest work by Father LaFarge.

The noted Jesuit, concerned with a national problem, keeps his eyes on the world.

"We can refute the charge of hypocrisy," he writes, "and can heal a serious wound to the prestige of our country, if we decide on and practice a policy of complete justice and equality for our racial minorities. If the rest of the world sees that the United States treats everyone within its borders solely on the basis of his individual personal worth, with no discrimination of race, color, creed or national origin, our country can look the rest of the world squarely in the eye."

The thought brings to mind Mr. Malik and the peoples of the East.

For priests, the book is especially apropos. Discrimination among human beings, like every human problem, is at root a moral problem. Hence, it is a problem for priests.

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"No Postponement" makes a remarkably good motto in dealing with Mr. Malik.—John G. Nolan.

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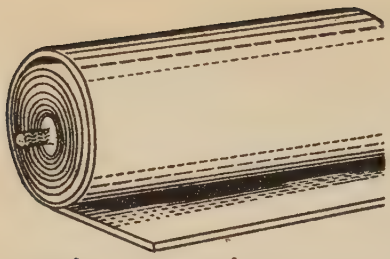

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Currente Calamo

Continued from page 896

priests trade upon the superstition of their followers and the ignorance of the general public in matters botanical.' It is true, fanatics have sometimes stolen Hosts, submitted them to awful indignities, even stabbing them. In some cases, such Hosts have 'bled.' When this takes place immediately on being struck, there can be no connection between this result and that caused by **bacillus prodigiosus**, because the latter organism does not appear until several days have elapsed and, unless it is warm enough and damp enough, no red drops will occur.

"A few years ago I found this hoary old slander against Catholic priests perpetuated in a popular science booklet, in which the author wrote: 'There is not much doubt that the resemblance (to blood) has been exploited by priests in the Mediterranean countries.' This remark was more inconceivable in that the writer had been at great pains throughout his book to insist that no reliable conclusions could be drawn from any experiment unless, at the same time, a control had been set up to exclude all possibility of error. In other words, one should be sure of one's facts and evidence. So I wrote and gently called his attention to his inconsistency in making statements without any evidence, and pointed out that his remark was not only unscientific, but offensive. I must say that, in his reply, he was generous enough to admit that my rebuke was justified, though he qualified this by adding 'to some extent'; but he promised to amend the phrase in the new edition."

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Currente Calamo

New Arrival

Mission Studies reached our desk a few weeks ago—published by The Mission Secretariat under the joint sponsorship of the National Office of The Society for the Propagation of the Faith and the mission aid and mission sending societies of the United States (1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington 5, D. C.) It's a quarterly, on good stock, handsomely got up; the first issue, some hundred pages of articles, news, and book reviews. Cardinal Spellman contributes an introduction "A Call and a Prayer"; some other contributions—Fathers Tennant, D'Souza, Braun, McGowan, van Caeneghem, and M. Jacques Maritain. We hope it can maintain the very high standards of this first number. One could hardly wish it anything better than that.

The Vernacular Again

HERE is an argument for the vernacular which comes from a missionary in South America. He tells us that such a change would be welcome in the diocese he now works in where he sometimes has thirty or more baptisms at a time. One must remember of course that his particular district has been terribly under-manned for many years and that the presence of these American auxiliaries is making a tremendous difference. He tells us that at the first baptism he ever administered, fresh from ordination, "I had one-hundred for my morning's work." Incidentally, missioners from Guatemala report Mass baptisms of three hundred to eight hundred.

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"I'm calling about a poor old lady who's dying—"

"You want Home and Family Service. If you'll wait a minute, Father, I'll have you connected." Three minutes pause. "I'm sorry, Father, there doesn't seem to be anyone up there right now. Could I have them call you in half an hour?"

"But all I want is to have someone go out there and fix her a little soup or an eggnog or something before she dies."

"What's the name, Father?"

"Meyers, Christine Meyers, at 7918 Arlington Avenue."

"Oh, yes. I remember that name. I think we have a file on her. Just a minute, Father." Five minutes wait. "Could I call you back?"

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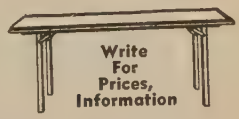

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lief. What's she doing with the money she gets from the city? We can't do anything in the case, anyway, until Public Assistance releases the matter. Couldn't she pay a neighbor to look after here in the meantime?"

In desperation: "All I want you to do is to send someone around there for a few hours so that she can die in peace."

"I'm sorry, Father, but it's so late in the afternoon now. Let me call you first thing in the morning."

Nine-thirty next day: "Father (brightly), Home and Family is trying to get Mrs. Meyer into the Convalescent Home at Harmarville. Perhaps if you were to call there yourself you might speed things up a little. I've been discussing the matter with Dr. Watson and Miss Dowd . . . "

"All I want is someone to go in there and look after that woman for a few days. Good Lord, isn't there anyone down at your place that can take hold in a situation like this?—or must I call the Salvation Army?"

"Father! (injured) We've been working on Mrs. Meyer's case for several months . . . "

"I can believe that!"

" . . . And I assure you we're doing all we can for her."

"But about that home-nurse. The poor old girl's pretty sick, you know . . . "

"I'm sorry, Father. It's — let me see—it's Friday, too late to send anyone out now. You see, we're closed over the weekend. Could I call you first thing Monday morning?"

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Selling the Paper

WE were talking to a priest the other day who sells a weekly 400 copies of **Our Sunday Visitor** in his parish.

"How do you do it?" we asked.

"It's easy," he said. "I look over the paper Saturday night before turning in, and then I plug one particular article in my announcements. In fact, every once in a while I build a sermon around the leading article — juvenile delinquency and the responsibility of parents, divorce, Catholic education—whatever it may be that catches my eye.

"People are naturally inert. Unless you remind them every week, they'll rush right out of Mass and you'll find yourself stuck with a stack of leftover papers. It's the weekly plug that sells them."

Lately, incidentally, we asked the circulation department of O. S. V. for the names of those who get the largest bundles of the paper.

First is St. Stephen's Church of Minneapolis with a weekly order of 17,000 copies—Regular Edition.

Then St. Bernard's Church of Fitchburg, Massachusetts, selling 1400 weekly of the News Edition.

St. George's Church, Louisville, and the Little Flower High School in Philadelphia come next with 1200 weekly of the News Edition.

A Suppliant Prayer

THE following comes to us from Fr. Cyril Mitera, O.F.M., of 3140 Miramec St., St. Louis 18. Fr. Cyril found it some years ago, typed on a card with neither name nor date. Impressed with its beauty, he got ecclesiastical ap-

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proval for it and had a few thousand copies printed on cards which he is now distributing to priests and religious.

We think it would make an appropriate marker for any priest's breviary. Here it is:

O my God and my All, in Thy goodness and mercy, grant that before I die I may regain all the Graces which I have lost through my carelessness and folly.

Permit me to attain that degree of merit and perfection to which Thou didst desire to lead me, and which I failed by my unfaithfulness to reach.

Mercifully grant also that others regain the Graces which they have lost through my fault.

This I humbly beg through the merits of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Immaculate Virgin Mary.

Television and Forty Hours

THERE are few occasions we enjoy so much as a neighborhood get-together at Forty Hours: the jubilant ceremonies preceded by a nice supper and followed by a few hours of joke-swapping, diocesan casuistry, etc. It all helps morale and gives one that Ecce-quam-bonum feeling.

But, sad to say, we must report a change in the age-long routine. The last time we attended one, the pastor ushered us into his front room after church, snapped on the TV, and turned off the lights. Then every time someone opened his mouth with a story or perhaps a

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Write For Our Brochure

question, he was put in his place with a good loud shush from the rest of the company.

We regret to see the passing of this grand old institution — the clerical bull-session. We hereby register our emphatic protest. Pereat TV, leastwise at Forty Hours celebrations!

Latin Dead?

ORATE FRATRES aired out a grand old story which it picked up in turn from **The Catholic Herald** and we pass it on to you. It seems that the young curate thought he might do the pastor a favor by improving his pronunciation (he was a very young curate):

"Father," he said, "you won't mind my telling you that the word is 'cirCUMdabo' — not 'circumDAbo.'"

"Not at all, young man," said the pastor. "That's just where you're wrong. It is 'circumDAbo.' You see, it's in the ablative."

And that reminds us of another one which, we think, Msgr. William (**Keepers of the Eucharist**) Schaefers told us—if we're not crediting him erroneously.

Anyway, dear little Sister had just ushered a Bishop into the parlor. It was her first meeting with a Bishop; she was thrilled; and she was going to do it right. Pointing elegantly to a chair, she bowed and whispered, "Et reliqua, Bishop!"

(That's what they always said in choir when it was time to sit down.)

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By C. C. Martindale, S.J.

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Correspondence

"Santa Claus or Christ?"

Editor:

MANY Catholic homes fail to make Christ the center of Christmas. The Archconfraternity of Christian Mothers has already distributed over one hundred and fifty thousand leaflets that aim at putting Christ back into Christmas. Our two leaflets are entitled "Christ in Christmas" and "Santa Claus or Christ?" They are priced at One Dollar per hundred plus twenty cents mailing charge.

Sincerely yours,

Bertin Roll, O.F.M. Cap.
Director General

220—37th Street,
Pittsburgh 1, Pennsylvania

The Vernacular Society

Editor:

THE splendid article, "The Breviary in the Vernacular" by Father H. A. Reinhold in **The Priest** has stirred widespread interest and has won for its scholarly author the deep appreciation of the priests of America.

I have often heard this topic discussed at various informal gatherings of the clergy and in every case the overwhelming majority favored the use of the vernacular in the recitation of the Divine Office. Indeed, the number of priests who

earnestly hoped and prayed that the Church would make such a change to enable them to say this daily prayer in English so that it would be a real lifting of the mind and heart to God instead of the mechanical movement of the eyes and lips generally exceeded 90 per cent of all the parochial clergy whom I have heard discuss the matter. Hence, **The Priest** would render a great service to the clergy of America if it would help to organize the petition of the priests to recite the Breviary in the vernacular and to channel that petition in a humble and respectful manner to the proper ecclesiastical authority.

This is one of the objectives of the Vernacular Society which came into existence at the Liturgical Conference held in Denver in 1946. There it was determined to form an organization to study, with due regard to ecclesiastical authority, the possibilities of a greater use of the vernacular in the Liturgical rites of the Church to the greater glory of God and the sanctification of souls. Since then, meetings of interested persons have been held during the annual Liturgical weeks.

"The use of the mother tongue," declares Pius XII in **Mediator Dei**, "in connection with several of the rites may be of much advantage to the people. But the Apostolic See alone is empowered to grant this permission." This surely means that the matter of the use of the mother tongue in Catholic rites is a proper subject for discussion. In the words of the English Liturgy Society, the subject naturally falls under three headings:

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1. "The rites of Baptism, Churching, Marriage, Visitation of the Sick, Reception of Converts, the administration of the Last Sacraments, and Funerals, together with the Blessings contained in the Rituale. We feel that all these rites, as they have a special individual-personal significance, would immeasurably deepen and strengthen the spiritual life of the participants if the latter understood them better and were able to take their part in them easily and naturally. The Blessings, too, now largely neglected, would be much more sought if the laity were more conversant with their meaning and use.

2. "Vespers and Compline, to which may be added the liturgical blessings of candles, ashes and palms, together with an extension of the vernacular prayers and hymns now allowed at the service of Benediction.

3. "The Mass. The Mass obviously stands in a category by itself for reasons that we need not enter into here. But even with regard to the Mass it is clear that the mind of the Church is open to suggestions for the better understanding of the liturgy by the faithful, as shown by the movement for the Dialogue Mass."

Doubtless, most of the priests of the country are in thorough sympathy with the objectives of The Vernacular Society and they can assist in the achievement of those objectives by joining this Society, membership in which is open to both the clergy and the laity. Priest members are invited to include the Society in some general

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way in their Memento of the Living in their Mass and to recite Tierce for its success. The membership fee is one dollar per year, with a life membership at ten dollars. Priests are invited to send their application for membership along with their fee to The Secretary, The Vernacular Society, 506 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago 5, Illinois.

Cordially in Christ,
John A. O'Brien
Notre Dame University

Need Breviaries?

Editor:

I AM purchasing a new set of breviaries. Where can I send my present set? It is five years old. Some European priest might be able to use it.

Yours,
L. E. Proulx
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"Prudence" and Our Negro Catholics"

Editor:

THANKS for that outstanding article in your worthy magazine: "'Prudence' and Our Negro Catholics." It's grand.

I'm working amongst the poor Colored—lovable people— and it's so discouraging to witness the attitude of some of our Priests and Sisters and Laymen toward the Colored. . .

My twin-brother (Fr. Julian, C. P.) and I are working amongst the Colored here in Eastern North Carolina. He's been in the work twenty-two years. I'm here a little over three years. We have fine

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schools (Grade and High). It's grand work, but Oh! so difficult!

When I get a few dollars together, I'm going to subscribe to The Priest. I'm borrowing my brother's copies.

God bless "y'all."

Sincerely

John Joseph Endler, C.P.
Mother of Mercy Mission
Washington, North Carolina

"May God Reward You"

Editor:

I HAVE just received an appointment to mission work in the Philippine Islands. Six of us Columban Fathers are scheduled to sail from San Francisco towards the end of September. Through the medium of your fine magazine, I want to say a few words of thanks to my brothers in Christ, the secular priests of America. I owe it to them.

By way of introduction, let me say of myself that I have been a familiar figure on the doorsteps of many a rectory up and down the U. S. A. Seven years spent ringing doorbells. I've been in 38 states of the Union and have operated in 32 different dioceses.

For seven years I have been — a beggar. That's the word for it. There are nicer names for the work. It is properly referred to as "Promotion." Officially we were "Directors of Promotional and Vocational Activities," recently abbreviated to "Field Men." But jok-

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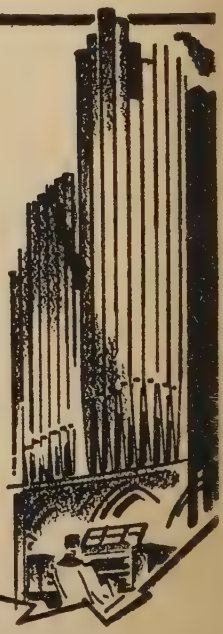

ingly among ourselves we used the label "road-agent." Whatever flag we flew, the work was the same anyway. "Beggar" fits.

It consisted in traveling around this fair country of ours, asking permission of pastors to appeal in their churches for a collection or to talk in their schools to incite young people to follow in the footsteps of the Apostles, with particular encouragement to enlist with the Columban Foreign Missionaries.

No "Terrible Job"

It was pretty hard work, I can tell you. People, mostly priests, used to sympathize with me, saying: "It must be a terrible job. I don't envy you in the least. I wouldn't have it for a million dollars." It was hard at times, but most emphatically, it wasn't a terrible job. The priests of the country saw to that.

I feel I owe you all an apology. When I was first appointed to the job, I was just about as frightened of it as a man could be. I dreaded it. But I had underestimated my fellow priests. They are swell fellows, the finest in the world.

Since I first hit the road I have met many priests. Most of their names and faces are mixed up already. A bad memory. But week after week I was dependent on you for hospitality and for friendship. You gave what you could give, often more than you could afford. You amazed me with your knowledge of and interest in the missions. I got that collection (usually), talked in the school, then thanked you and walked out of your lives.

A mere "Thank you, Father," is a poor way of expressing one's ap-

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Correspondence

preciation for fellowship and friendship given so generously and so kindly. I would like to thank you all in a more adequate way. But what can I do? You know how I feel.

May God reward you all. Say an occasional prayer for—"the beggar."

Pat Cashman

St. Columban's
Nebraska

The Prayers of Little Children

Editor:

POPE BENEDICT XV once wrote: ". . . A salutary counsel has been inspired to me by God: it is that the magnanimous kindness of Our Heavenly Father listens more willingly to the innocence of children than to the prayers of adults . . . "

During the past two years I have been looking for material on the subject of the efficacy or power of the prayers of little children. So far I have not been able to locate very much.

Would you be kind enough to publish a little note in your column in The Priest asking your readers to send in to me any matter on that subject?

I would make available to those who might be interested the texts or references sent in. I have many times mentioned the subject to various priests and have been told that the thesis has never been developed. Only scattered references can be found.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

H. R. Reardon

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For we have seen
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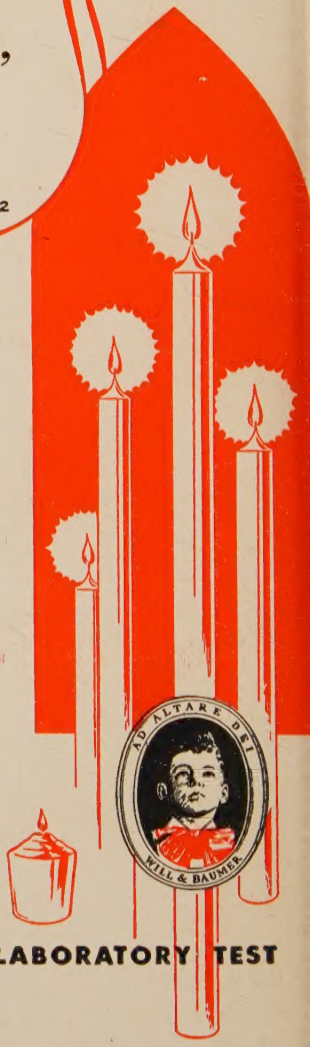
to adore Him.

ST. MATTHEW 2:2

We approach again that happy season of the Bethlehem star—His star—bright beacon which guided man to the Source of Truth and Goodness. Mankind rejoices—for that symbol still shines, visible to all who will turn their eyes and thoughts heavenward.



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